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CRASH

MICRO ACTION

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REVIEW OF GHOSTLY
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& TIPS, SIMON'S SCREENS,
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CRASH

MICRO GAMES ACTION



CRASH LIVE 2023

Incredibly, here I am thinking about, and planning, the next CRASH Live event. We have the date – 18th November – and a new location, the Holiday Inn in Kenilworth Warwickshire, the town where I have lived for nearly 30 years after moving from Wales.

We just held our ZZAP! Live there on the 24th August – just a few short

weeks ago at the time of writing this editorial. From reading the reams of online feedback and videos, those who came enjoyed the day – the aim now to replicate that success for CRASH Live 2023, and tinker here with what we do at the venue based on feedback.

We have already announced our first guest – Ian Oliver! One of the guys behind one of my favourite Spectrum games, *3D Starstrike*. Many preferred the sequel, with its improved filled in graphics, but it was always the *Star Wars* inspired original that was my go-to game back in the day. It's still great for a blast

even now!

Tickets should go on sale very shortly, so watch out for announcements on <https://fusionretroevents.co.uk>.

We will be announcing new guests frequently now over the next few weeks as they are firmed up - it's all shaping up to be a great event and I hope you can make it!

IN OTHER NEWS..

The anniversary of Oliver Frey's passing was the 21st August - I keep asking myself where on earth that year has gone. It seems like just yesterday I was in Ludlow having a meal in the Charlton Arms Hotel in with Roger and Oli talking about the old days of Newsfield.

Sometimes I have to remind myself both of them are not with us anymore.

I am sure that wherever they are they continue to be proud that CRASH is still alive and kicking and doing well, and that the 2nd CRASH Live event is just around the corner.

Thinking of both of guys, as always.

Enjoy the issue!

Chris Webb



NEWS & PREVIEWS

Welcome to another packed month in Specland. There's a number of tasty news items which hit CRASH Towers this month, with some particularly exciting announcements for NEXT owners.

For backers of the second Spectrum NEXT Kickstarter, the end of the journey is finally approaching. Whilst delivery of the machines was originally pitched for Q3, a last minute problem with the case moulds has caused an unwelcome delay, but the team is now confident that everything is back on track and backers should be receiving their machines in October-November.

In other NEXT news, owners of the newest member of the ZX family have a huge new game to play this month, in the form of an *Attick Attack* remake. You can read a sneak peak in this issue with a full review planned for issue 18.

Back in the world of beepers and colour clash, fans of the uncombed one have also had a treat this week,



with the release of a *Mr Hair* compilation, which features all four games and a few extra goodies. This

limited release is now sold out and will make for quite the collectors item for those lucky enough to have grabbed one.

Lastly, popular Spec developer, Menyiques have quickly followed up their *Mario Game & Watch* game with *Mickey and Donald* in the same series. You can get it here: <https://on.mom/BXJY>

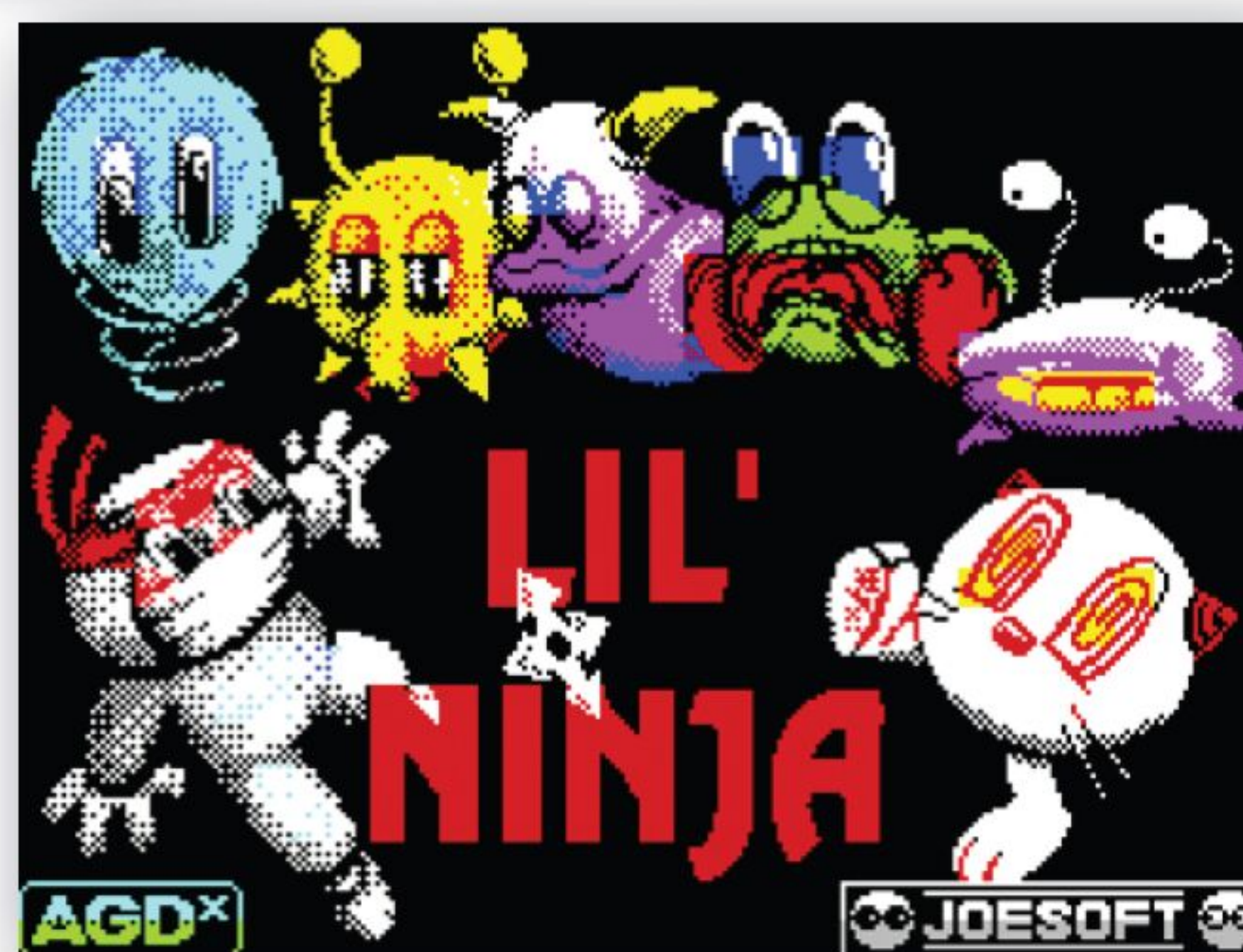


RUN DECKARD, RUN!



Boriel Runner is a just released game from Spec coder, Briefer666. The game captures the feel of those tap and slide runners which were popular on smart phones a few years back. This spin on the genre is inspired by the themes of *Blade Runner* and we hope to take a better look it for our next issue: <https://mysl.nl/mZrA>

BIG FUN



Just before we went to the presses, Joesoft announced their latest title, a great looking platform shooter about, well... a lil' ninja! A quick play reveals a fun and lively little game and we'll be taking a closer look at it next issue. If you want to beat us to it, you can already grab the game at: <https://on.mom/ufDu>

The irrepressible graphic maestro, Ric Lumb, is back again, and as per his usual modus operandi, he's busy spinning plates on multiple projects. Those familiar with his work will know his love for cartoony-style graphics and lots of humour in his pieces. These upcoming titles are no exception, and we look forward to reviewing them in the near future.

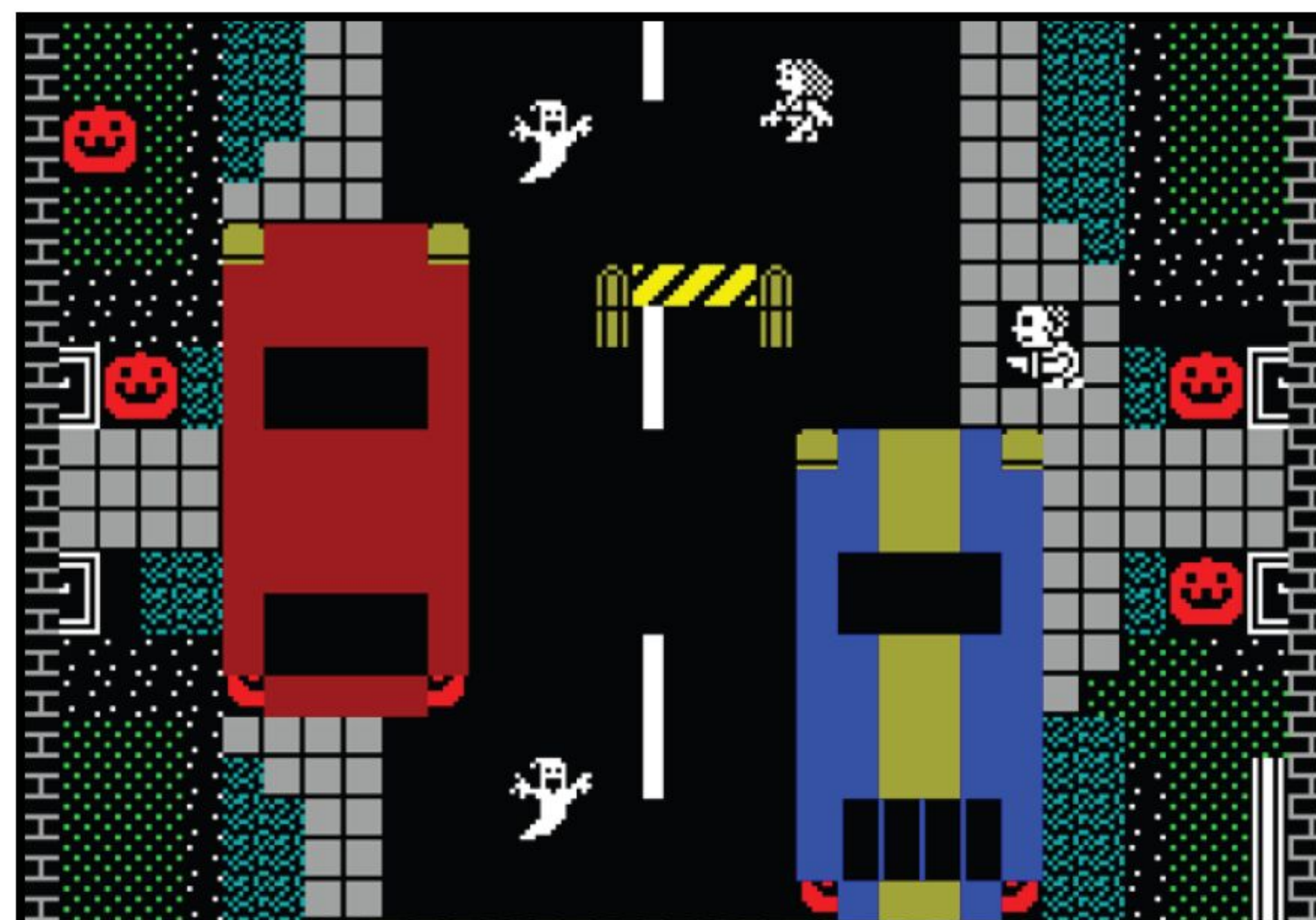
Why not pay a visit to his Twitter page? There, he frequently shares updates with his followers about the progress of his games. @PuttyCad

Scream Queen

The clue is in the title, isn't it? *Scream Queen* is a survival horror game where you have to escape each level while being pursued by enemies. All the levels are loosely based on different 80s movies. As you can

see from the delicious screenshot, it features a menacing sprite resembling Mr Vorhees. Let's hope we see many classic horror icons in this anticipated homage to horror. What's more excellent about this

game is the news that Master Lumb Jr is making the game with his dad - top stuff. It's not just Sloanysoft who commands respect for the father and son combo.



Gherbert In The Garden

For those who haven't fallen in love with the *Monty Mole*-esque Gherbert, you need to play his last outing of 'Save the Date', which was a very enjoyable platform adventure. Not one to stick with the same genre, Ric's artistic influence has taken the game to an

isometric aesthetic. In this adventure, Gherbert's kids find themselves digging up the neighbour's garden, only to awaken an irate bear. As the mischievous kids pop up from the ground, they leave behind holes that Gherbert must swiftly fill while evading slithering snakes and the perturbed sleepwalking bear

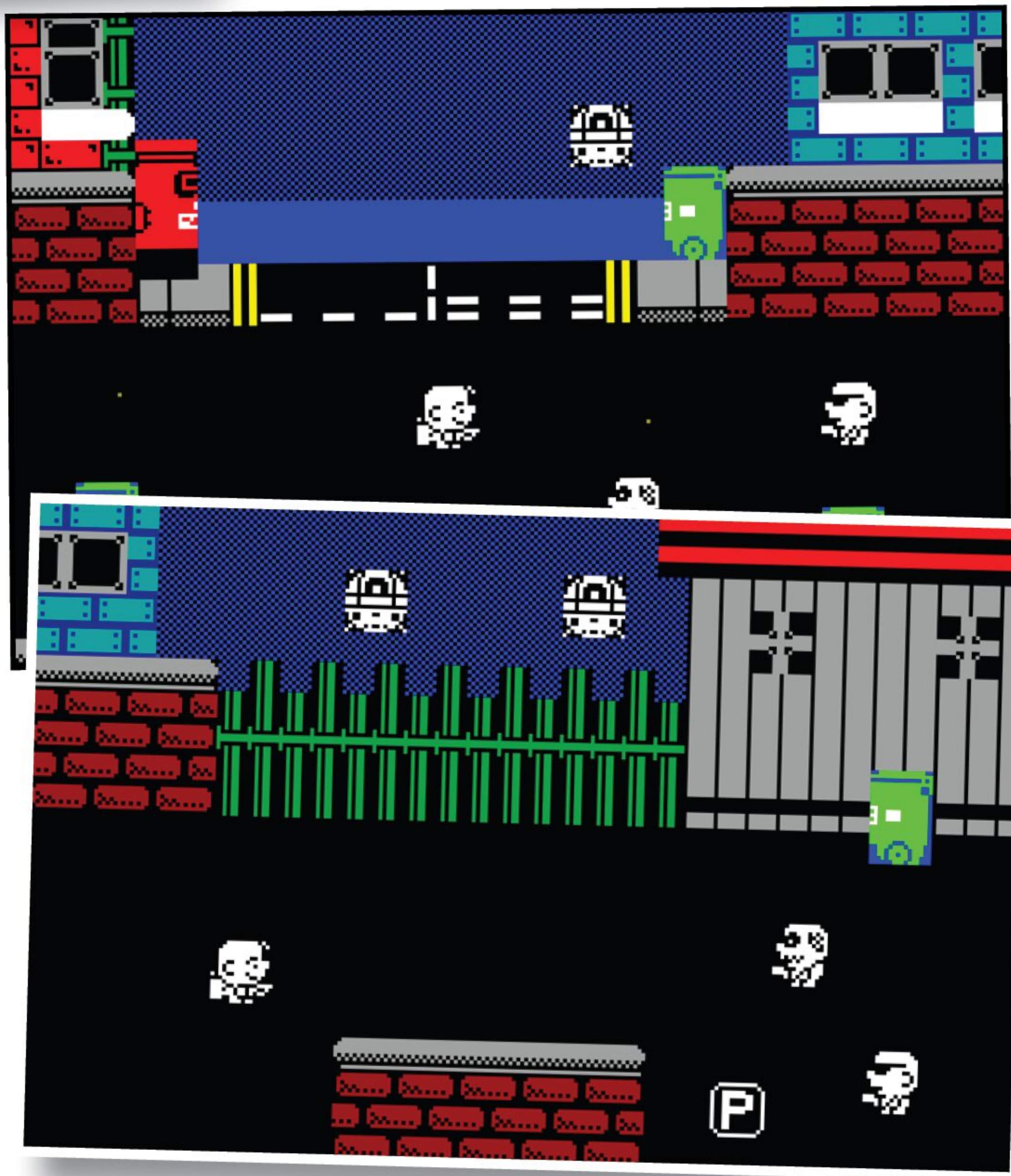
himself. Ric is joined by Jeff Murray, also known as the Psychic Parrot, who is digging up the code.





Babyman 3: Babyman VS Terminatots

In his third escapade this year, our hero still finds himself trapped within a baby's body. *Babyman* is on a mission to reach Professor Plumbob's laboratory to reverse his transformation and return to his adult form to get back to the present time. Unfortunately, Terminatots have been sent to stop him from achieving his goals. The game features a flip-screen beat 'em up mechanic, offering power-ups that can be acquired by defeating the Baddy Baby Bots! Could this possibly be his final adventure? Nigel Critten (from 100 Tin Soldiers) is teaming up with Ric on this mission.

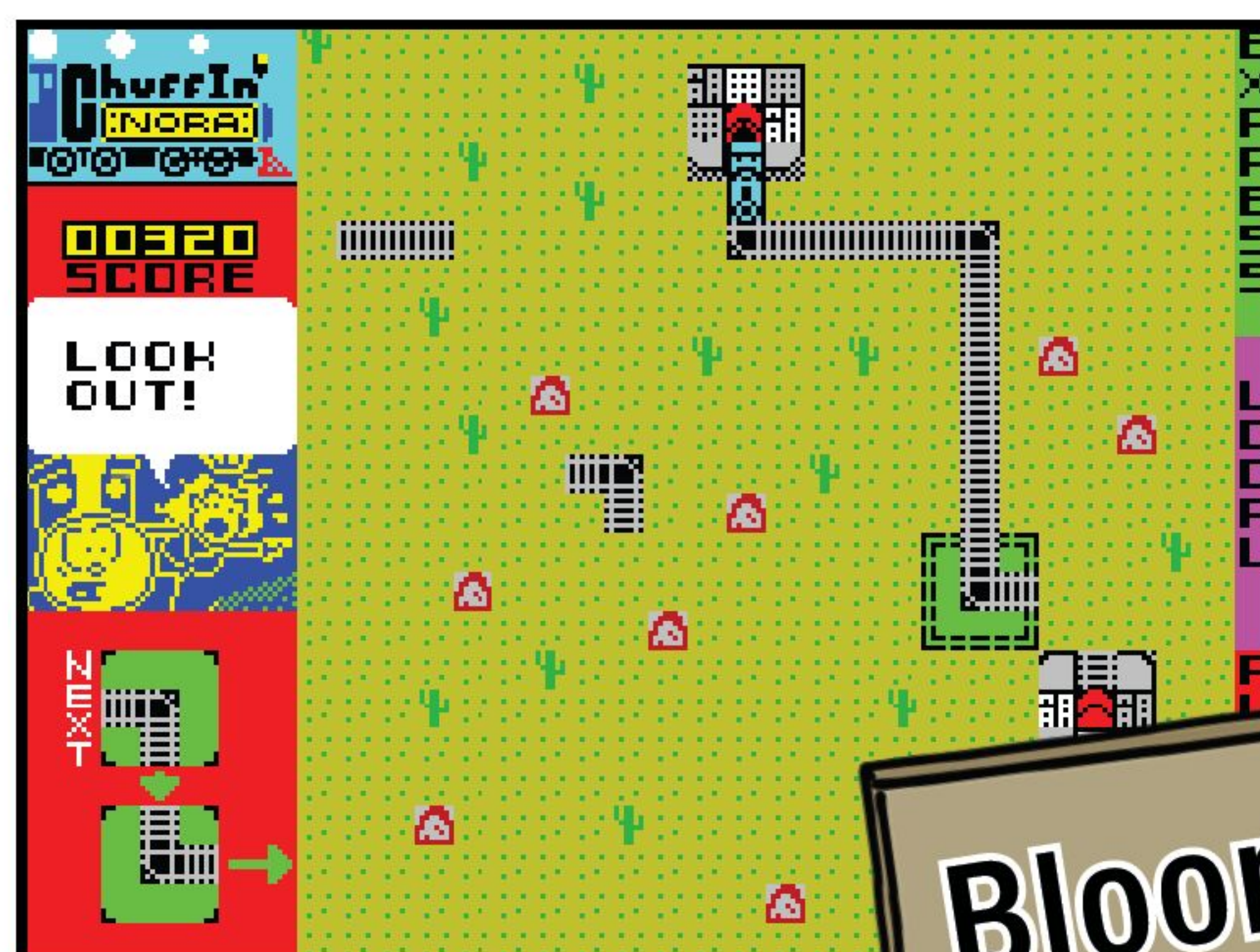
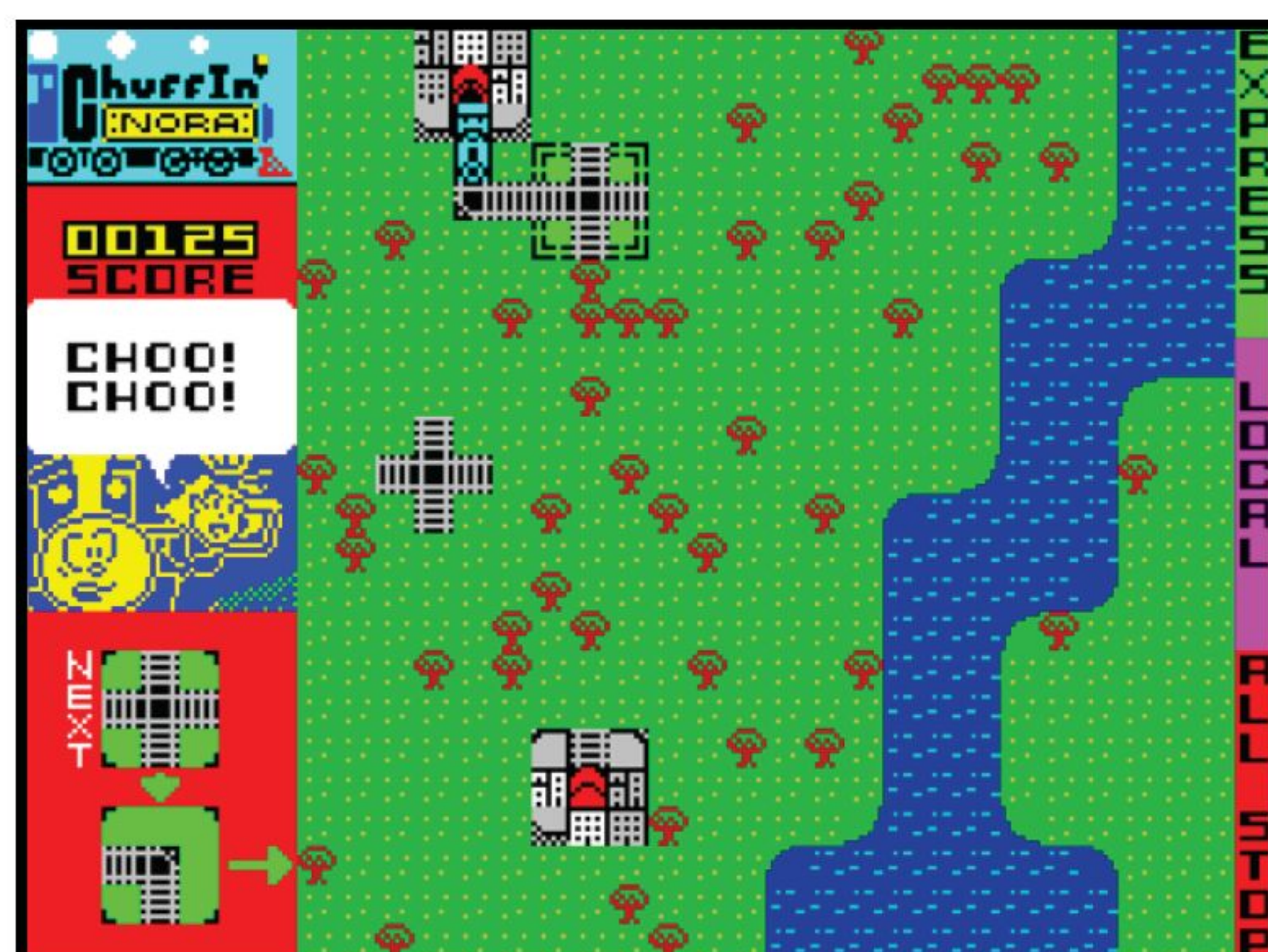


Chuffin' Nora

In a change of pace from Ric's usual style, he is also working on *Chuffin' Nora*, a train track puzzle game. You have to Guide Nora (the

train) from city to city by flying track pieces into place using drones. This looks like a fun strategy puzzler with a hint of influence from *Tetris*,

perhaps? Laying the tracks on this project is Rich Pea (Rich Hanson).

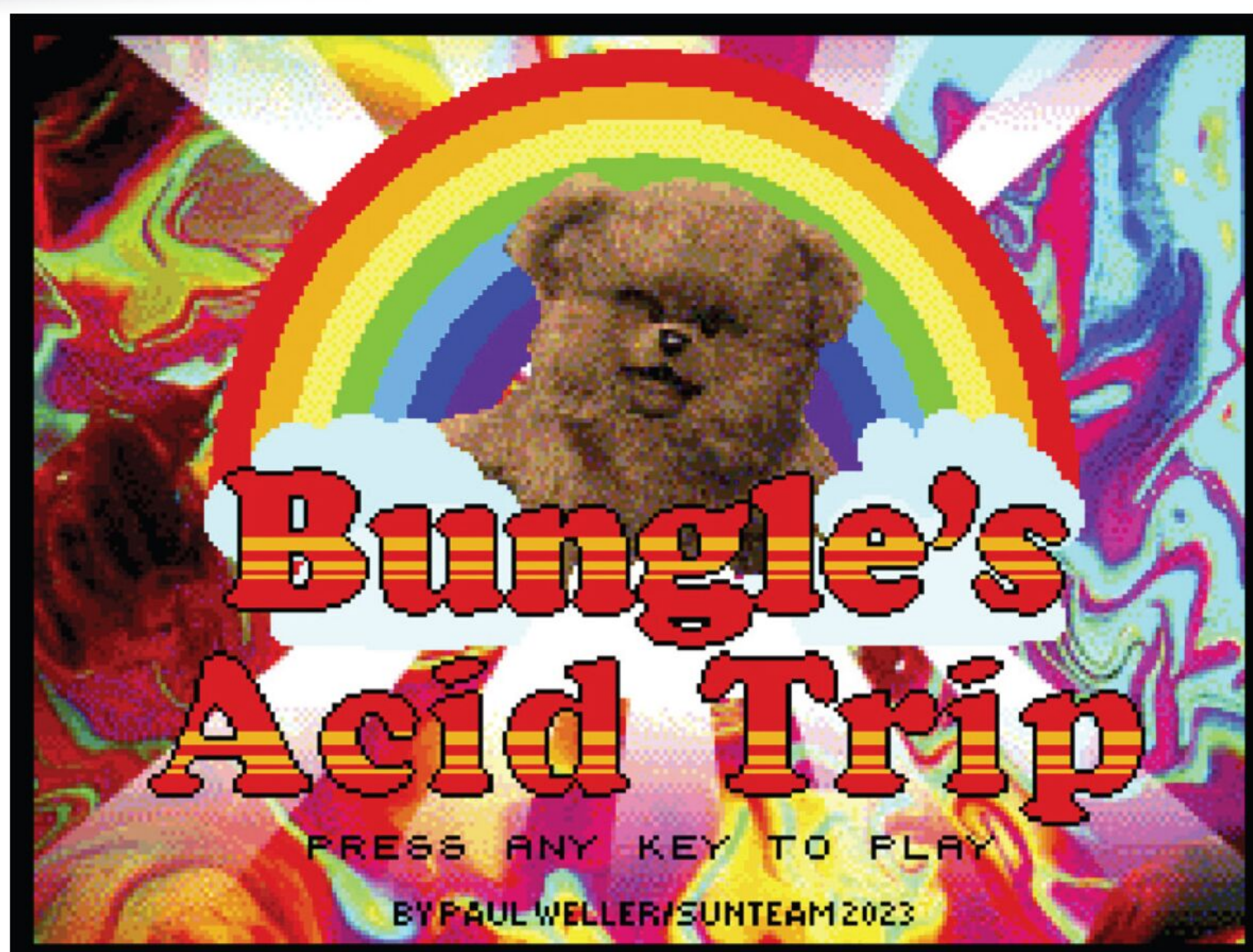


Blooming Heck

THE SUNTEAM HAVE GOT THEIR HAT ON, HIP-HIP-HIP-HOORAY

The industrious Sunteam has been whipping their Oompa-Loompa staff, resulting in the release of a whole cache of games for the Next. CRASH knows our readers love the Next to get as much exposure as the legacy computers do, so let's have a little look at what's in store.

Bungle's Acid Trip



ACIIIIIIIIIIIIID! From abandoned warehouses to dancefloor utopias, rave was freedom, even for the gang that presented Rainbow.

Inspired by a lesser-known game called *Hurkle* on the Commodore PET, this hallucinogenic remake features non-other than the friendliest teddy bear on the planet - Bungle.

He's blaming an overdose of citric acid in his recipe for the altered states. Yeah, right, mate. A word of warning, this disturbing game will affect your sleep pattern. In this top-down adventure, you assist Bungle in searching for his fellow Rainbow presenters. If you're not familiar with UK television, consider exploring this timeless show available on YouTube.

<https://on.mom/cFGB>



OUT THERE



Duckie Duck Duck

In the words of author Paul Weller, *Duckie Duck Duck* was crafted to capture the essence of straightforward type-in games featured in magazines like Sinclair Programs.

True to this intent, the game delivers precisely that experience. We're well aware that CRASH magazine focused on gameplay rather than inundating readers with pages of code listings.

Nonetheless, we hold admiration for our 'rival' publications for promoting programming endeavours.

The game itself is your basic dodge-the-baddy-styled



game. But what's so special is that, just like with type-in listings, you can dive into the code, experiment with the script, and yes, occasionally

disrupt it - ahem, I mean, gain valuable insights from it.

<https://on.mom/GUfb>

Die, Ragus!

For those eager to dive into some text adventures on the Next, *Die Ragus* might be what you're looking for.

Using well-known elements of medieval fantasy tropes, your task is straightforward: retrieve the stolen emerald that the notorious Lord Ragus has taken from your king.

Spanning only seven screens, the game doesn't claim to be an extensive adventure. This makes it a solid starting point for those new to the genre.

Written in *Adventuron*, a development system that has proven time and time again that it is the go-to adventure creation tool,

the player can expect the familiar ease of use of the parser and be able to navigate the digital realm with confidence.

<https://on.mom/LdNB>



THE DARK VEIL



Furillo Productions

£ FREE • JUNE 2023 • 48K

DOWNLOAD: <https://on.mom/WQcl>

For those who enjoy a bit of adventuring and reading such exploits of text-based gaming from our old Adventure Trail section, *The Dark Veil* provides for those with an appetite for gothic horror. Set within a desolate manor, you assume the role of an ennui-ridden urbanite, lured here by the sheer mundanity of their life. Once a resplendent abode, now a mere shadow of its former self, the mansion exudes

an aura of suffocating malevolence in every dimly-lit corner of its hallways and rooms. Compelled by the darkness, your character steps into the formerly opulent grand entrance. The mantle of choice now rests solely upon you - will you endure the night's trials and tribulations?

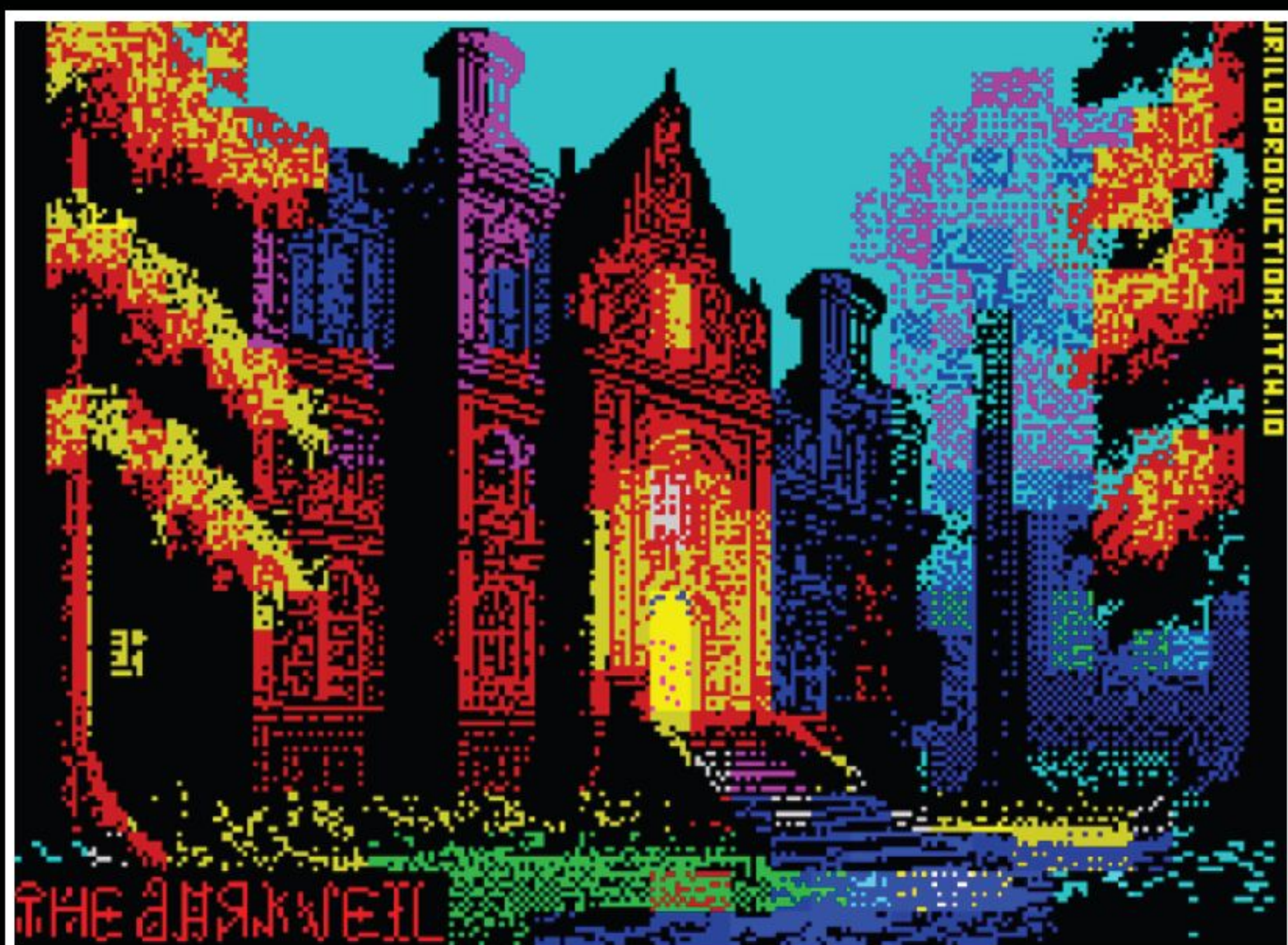
Instead of using a parser, the game unfolds through a sequence of choices offered to the player after the description of the room they presently occupy. For those thinking of the excellent *'The Doom*



of the Pond' adventure - it's nowhere near as complex as that with the choices. Imagine it like an interactive book, where the choices you make lead you to specific pages based on those decisions. Numerous pathways lead to your demise, accompanied by tormenting ZX art that vividly depicts the suffering. However, your ultimate objective is to locate all the keys hidden throughout the mansion to secure the correct path. You only have one night, so don't let that candle expire, so to speak.

Paul's Take

I've never really been one for text adventures. Way too many 'I don't understand's for my liking and even just learning the commands has been a cumbersome experience for me. I'd always end up dying after about five minutes too. How about this - an adventure game where you just choose options rather than having to think of which command to use and on what and in which place and etc. Suddenly, I was interested but then, suddenly I was dead. All I did was open a book. Won't be doing that again.

**Criticism**

The key to any captivating adventure resides within its narrative, and this is where *The Dark Veil* excels – being verbosely written and delivering a suspension of disbelief for the player. You sense the gothic Lovecraftian vibes emitting from the words and are aware of the evil presence

that silently observes with spewing hatred. It's somewhat of a one-trick pony since there's no real interaction beyond the basic choices; in a game of this nature, I longed for a robust parser,

one that would allow me to delve more intimately into the library, the greenhouse, and the hidden secrets below. In the end, I merely had the sensation of being a passenger on a text-based ghost train – an incredibly atmospheric ride, albeit one where I could not really choose the tracks to follow. Ultimately, the experience feels quite ephemeral.

- **Gordon King**

**Comments**

An atmospheric adventure that is well-written and has some brilliant art. Like most text adventures, it's devoid of any sound; I wonder if some creepy effects that sporadically played would create more tension. Check out the browser version as it has rain sounds.

Keyboard: Q,A & SPACE

Joystick: n/a

Use of Computer:	70%
Graphics:	80%
Playability:	65%
Getting started:	71%
Addictive Qualities:	69%

Overall: 71%

MARIO BROS

GAME & WATCH



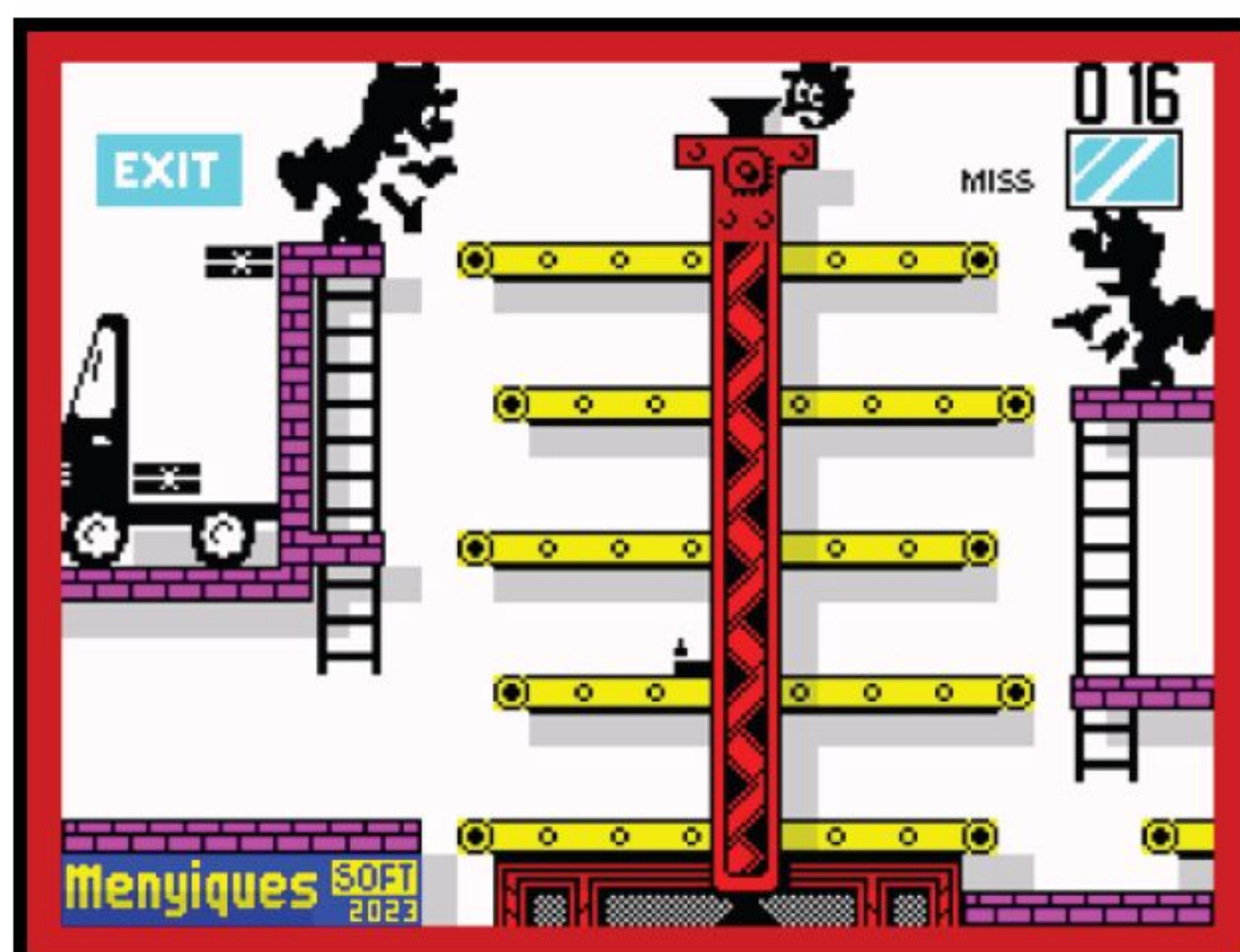
Menyiques

£DONATION • 📅 JUNE 2023 • 🎮 48K / 128K

DOWNLOAD: <http://on.mom/CKeW>

The *Game and Watch* series by Nintendo were very popular when first released, and should you want to get your hands on one these days, you'd better be prepared to part with a nice wad of cash. If you're one of those people who are little too tight to be spending that much money (my ears are burning) then

your prayers may have been answered here. Here is a Menyiques' take on the *Mario Bros. Game and Watch* game from 1983, and it's here in glorious Spectrum technicolour.



We know Mario and Luigi as plumbers these days, but in this incarnation, they take the role of bottle factory workers, working the line, running up and down ladders ensuring that bottles get packaged correctly and don't end up getting smashed on the floor. You only have to move each character up and down the screen at the right time - how hard can it be?

Criticism

At first, not that hard really. The game moves along as you would expect the original handheld game to - not exactly slow, though also not exactly fast as there is only one bottle to deal with at a time to begin with. Naturally, as the bottle moves up the conveyor belt, extra bottles enter the game, meaning that Mario or Luigi (you can't tell here given that the game is given the full LCD treatment) needs to be back at the start to ensure they're met at the starting point. There are only three positions available for each character, which allows you to get to grips with the controls relatively easily... until you've multiple bottles on the conveyor, that is.



Hand/eye coordination and anticipation are key here as one small mistake can be

costly, and you don't want to see Mario berate poor Luigi, do you? Well, maybe you,

Gordon's Take

Although a game may be a competent remake, one may wonder why there's a necessity for it. *Game & Watch* titles, as revered as they are, represent limited games that featured the best available technology for people on the move during this era. 8-bit micro-computer titles were significantly more advanced than the offerings on these pocket devices, and let's be frank, our parents wouldn't purchase for us as many portable games as they did in Spectrum games. The remake is competent and accurately replicates the original, featuring an impressive enlarged pseudo-LCD look. It plays tit-for-tat and induces the same kind of spinning plate anxiety as games like *Tapper* do. Those seeking a dose of nostalgia are likely to find the required sentimental twinge from such a game. Personally, I don't find any reason to revisit this game beyond the initial pang.



and I'll be honest, it made me giggle a little bit when I first saw it. There's a bit of a *Tapper* feel to this one as you eventually end up frantically trying to keep up, moving up and down either side of the screen, trying not to go crazy and scream at the TV. Nice.

- Paul Davies



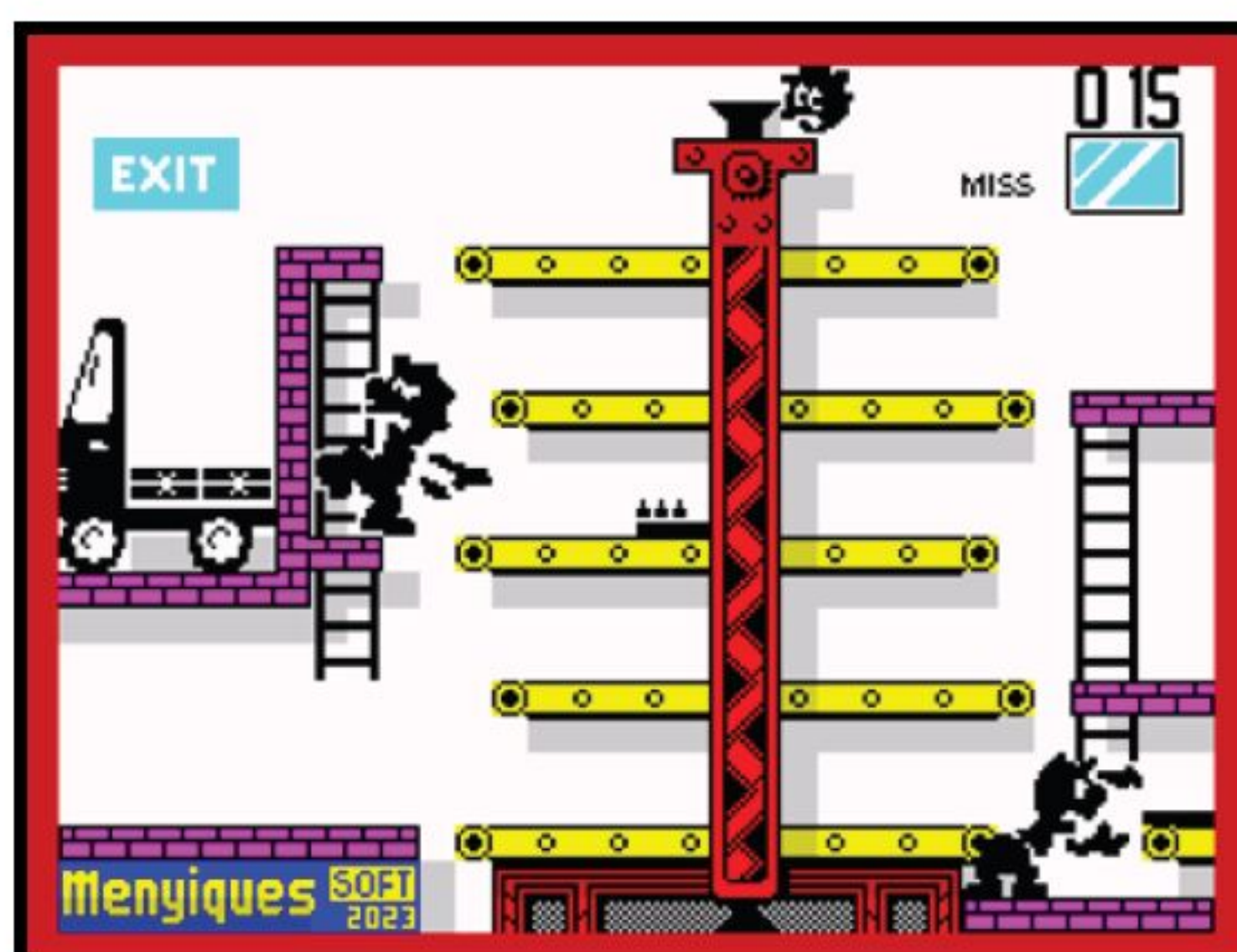
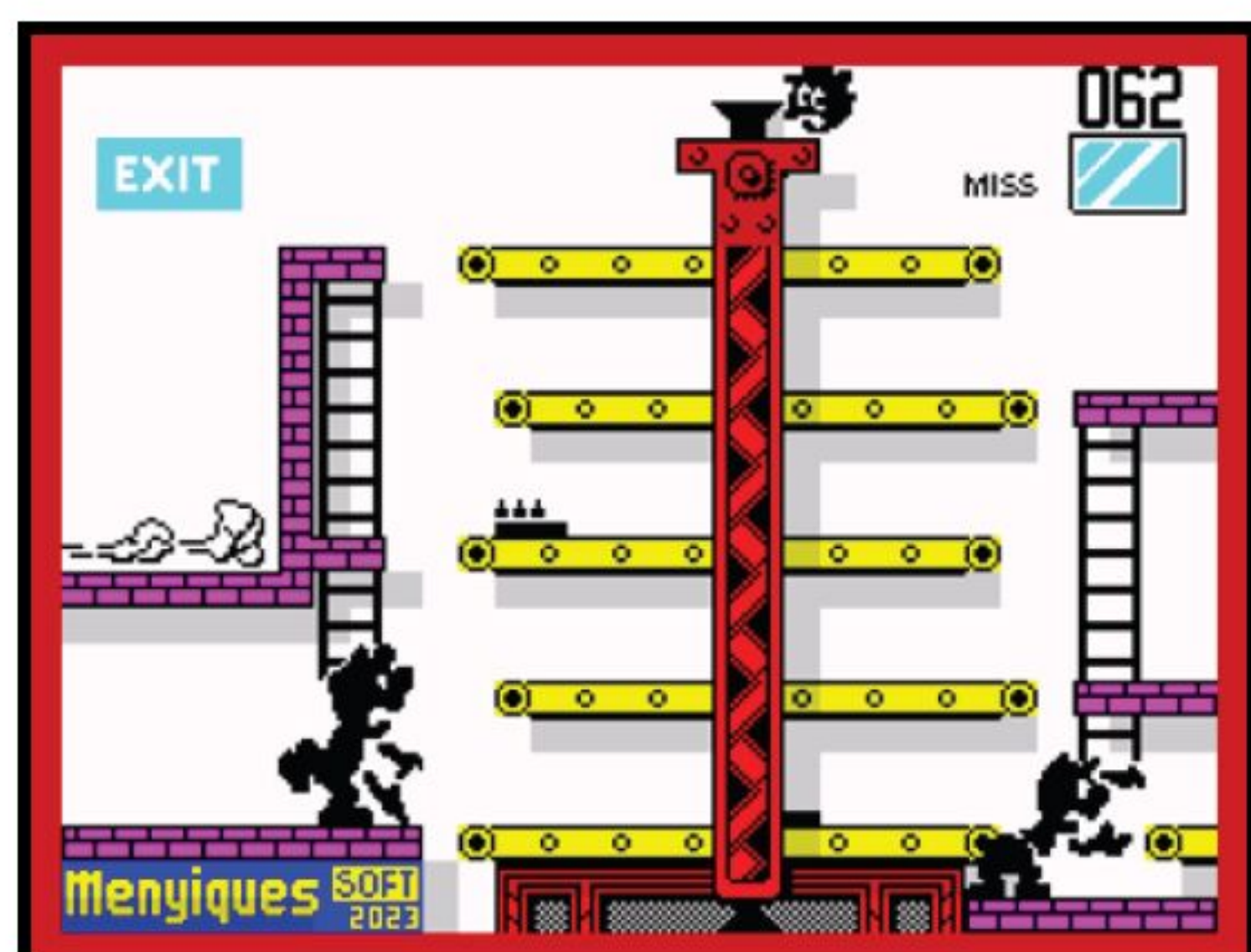
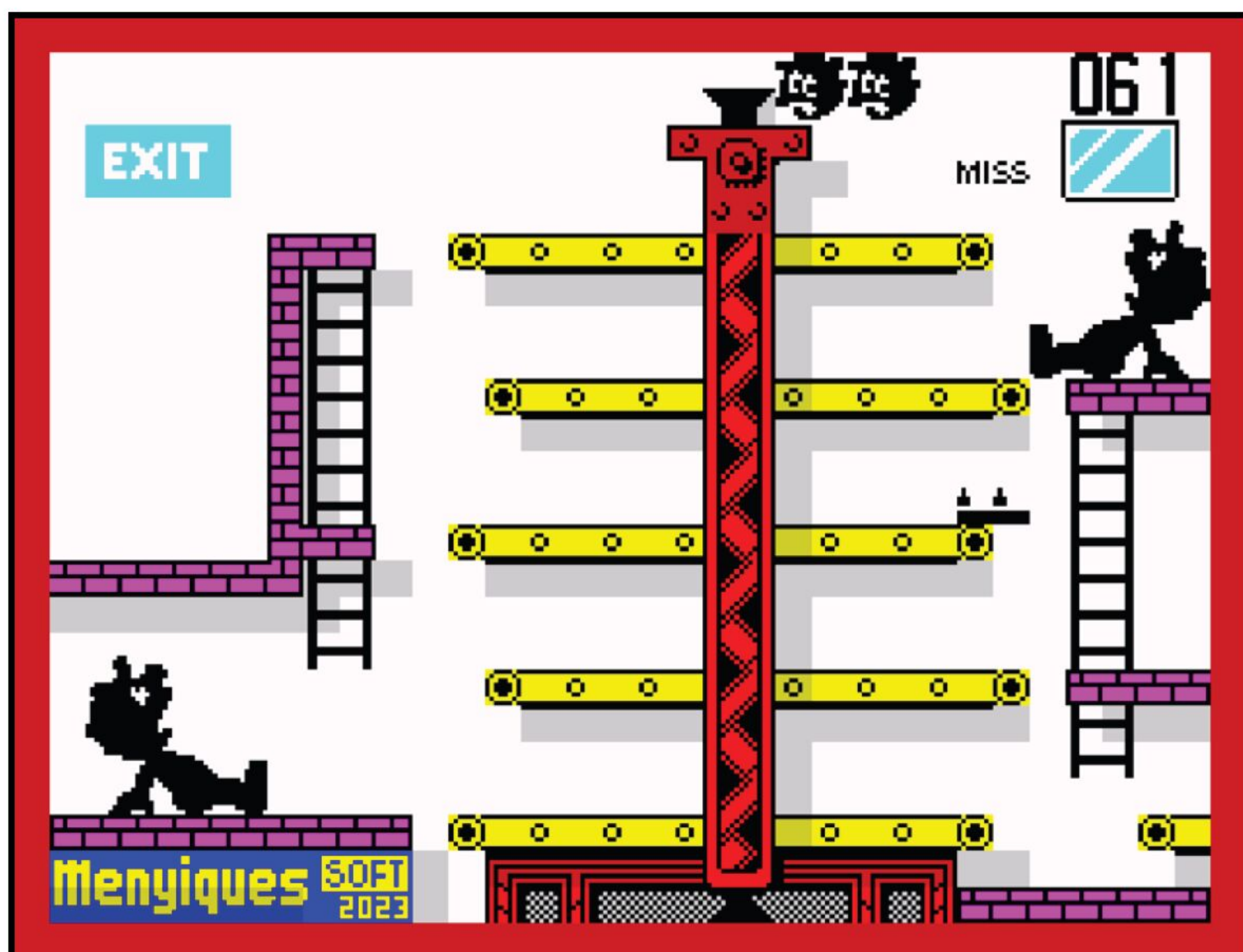
Comments

Graphics are crisp, colourful and the stark black of the characters works well against the background. Sound consists of a nice beeper tune on the menu, minimal beeps, and boops during gameplay. As a take on the *Game and Watch*, it's well done and serves its purpose though it may struggle with longevity, given there is only one level to play.

Keyboard: Q, A - Up and Down for Mario P, L -Up and Down for Luigi or re-definable

Use of Computer:	68%
Graphics:	74%
Playability:	67%
Getting started:	82%
Addictive Qualities:	67%

Overall: 65%





Simon Butler's

SCREEN\$

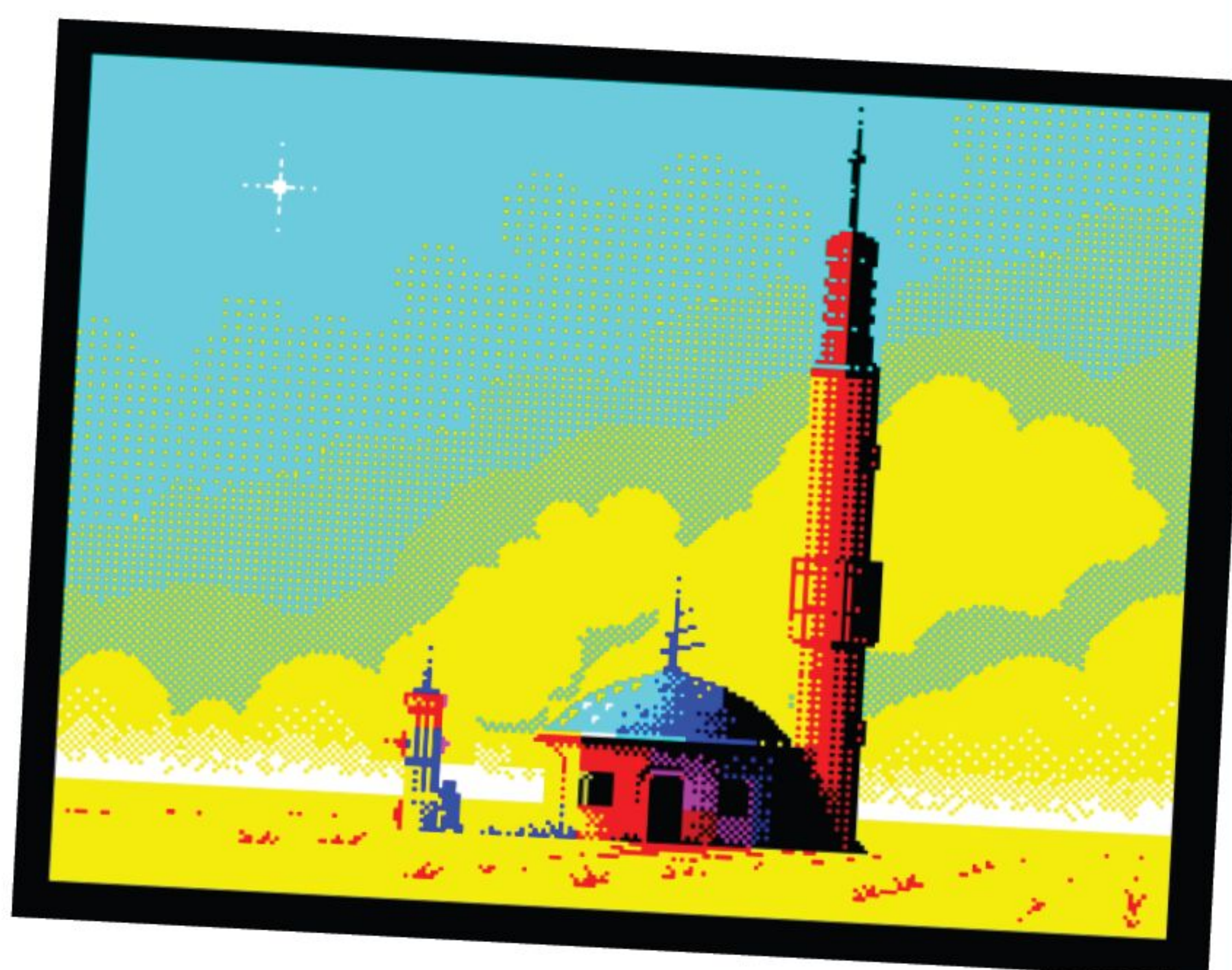
I'm a victim of my own sunny nature this month. Earlier this year I decided to be a bit of a smart-arse and deliver several reviews so that Chris had a stockpile to work from and wouldn't have to be chasing me up all the time.

With the stockpile empty and the clock a'tickin', I decided to do a feature on one particularly talented individual whose output invariably fills my potential images folder with frightening regularity. So here we have helpcomputer0 aka Adam.

Outpost 2023 by Adam 2023

There's more than a hint of the original Star Wars "feel" about this little beauty. What I perceive as dust clouds fill the skies in the distance with one star shining through the haze.

There may be other buildings in the vicinity, but the way the three constructs are positioned suggests to me at least that they are the only objects in this barren wasteland. There's an economy of line and detail in the entire image which shows a masterful hand at work, especially in the red scrub grass which cleverly leads away to the horizon with the slightest hint of perspective. A very nice touch. Despite the glowing "warm" colours there is a healthy dose of solitude and desertion about this image.

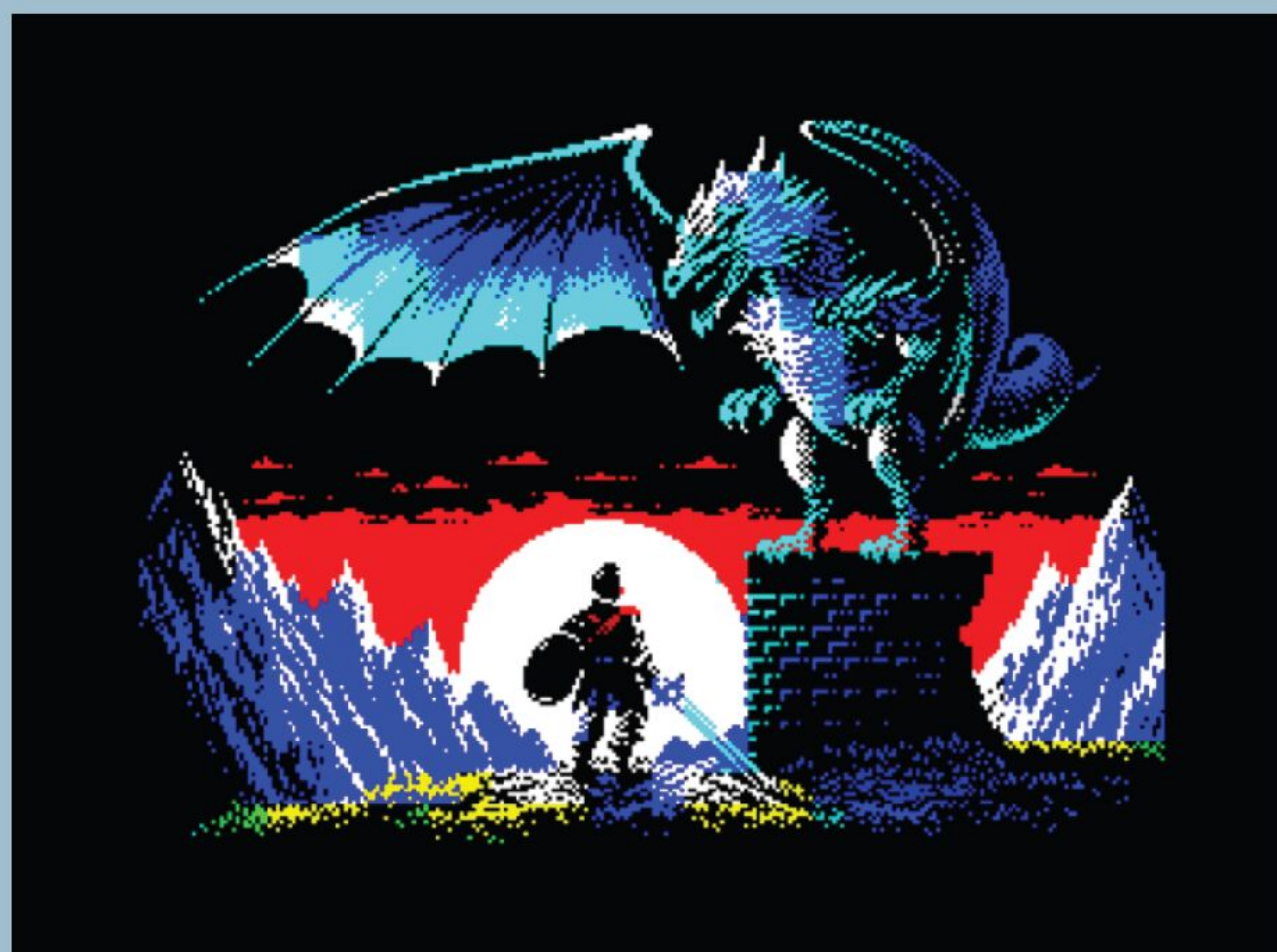


A classy start to our dip into this talented chap's portfolio.

Blue Dragon by Adam 2023

Moving swiftly on we find ourselves on a bleak hilltop where we are witness to an encounter between a lone warrior and a dire but magnificently detailed dragon. As with almost all of Adam's work the dreaded attribute clash is barely discernible and where present so cleverly circumvented one would think it didn't exist.

There's much to admire here, clever colour clash aside. The stance of both the giant reptile and the human contain character and give hints as to the situation at hand.



The sun sinking in the blood red sky holds the viewer's eye to the centre of the image yet when we look at the various elements we can marvel in the skill on display.

All this artwork and much more
can be viewed at www.zxart.ee

Rug Sellers by Adam 2023

Here we have something quite unlike our normal fare of alien worlds and fantasy creatures, finding ourselves in a sun-baked plaza where the rug makers of some distant tropical land have displayed their wares on the walls and windows of this secluded and deserted spot.



There is a great amount of detail here, especially in the goods for sale as well as some clever attribute work suggesting reflections of the buildings in the chequered floor of the empty square. The distinct lack of humanity in the foreground emphasises the blistering heat so well delineated in the white buildings, while in the distance, hidden in shadow is a small group of people safe in the cool of the darkness.

A quiet and contemplative piece, executed with style.

Monk by Adam 2023

Back in more familiar territory we finish our appraisal of this skilful exponent of the pixelated profession with an almost illustrative work.

The level of detail is outstanding from the grass and rocks to the whorls and twists in the gnarled trunk of the ancient tree with its branches clawing at the clouds.

The monk sits in a fantastically realistic pose, his body shadowed behind suggesting weight and strength. His face is hidden in the folds of his cowl lending gravitas and dark mysteries.



As with all of Adam's work, the brave use of the attributes is done with craft and skill.

There were many other examples but these are the ones I chose for now. Who knows, if his output continues apace there may well be more anon.

Devwill Too ZX



Amaweeks

£ 4.00 • 📅 MAY 2023 • 🖨 48K / 128K

DOWNLOAD: <https://on.mom/uYVO>

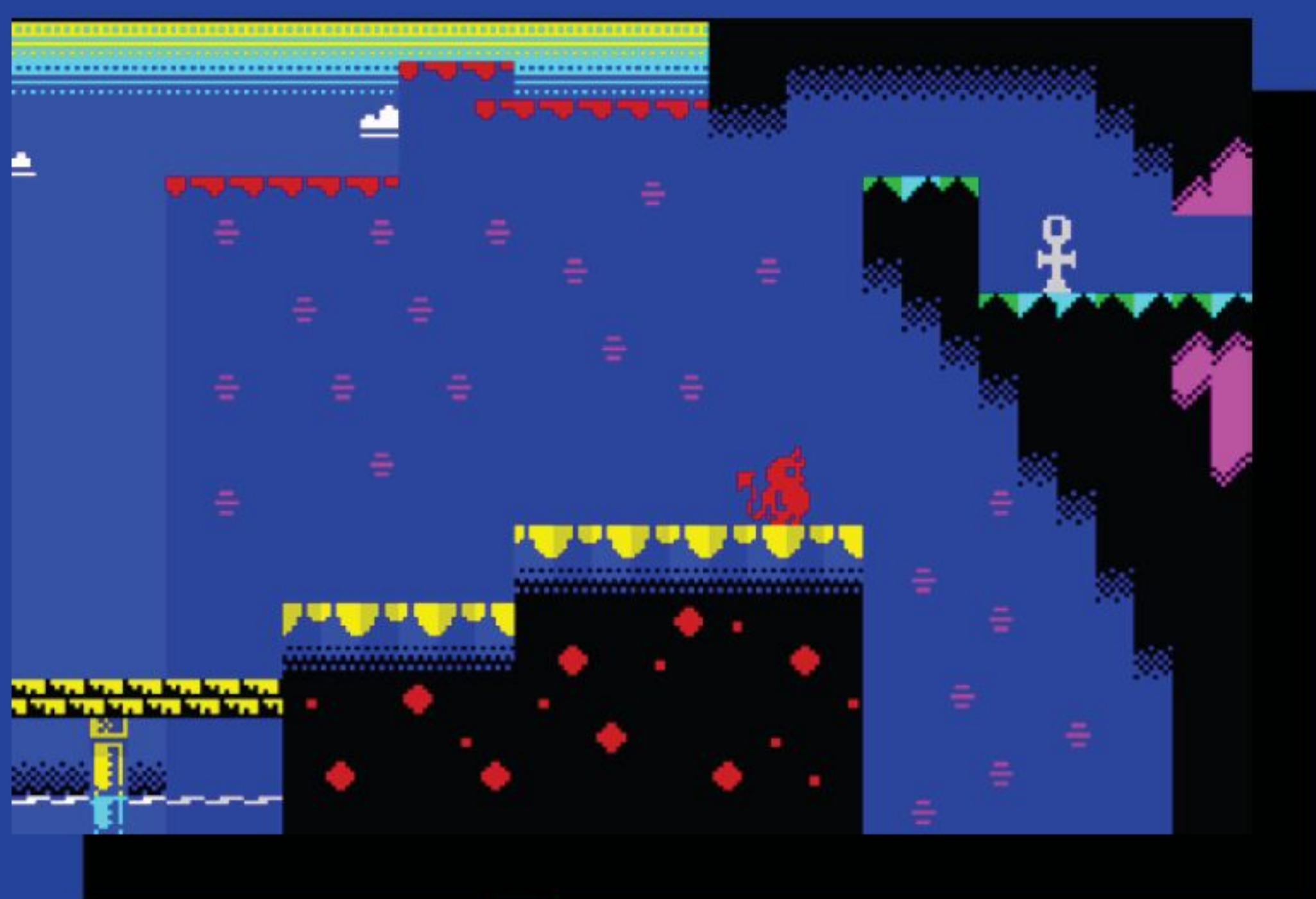
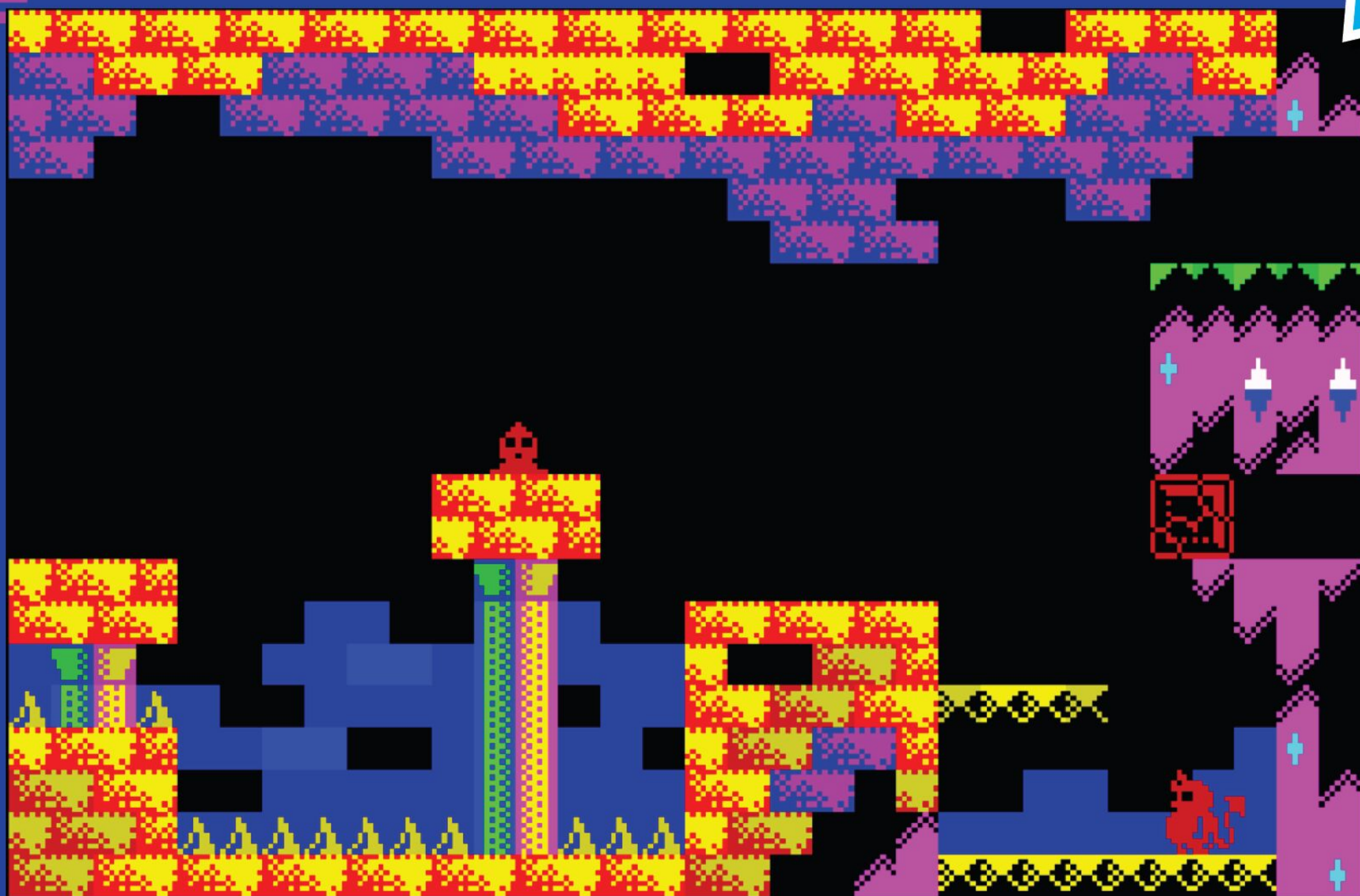
Physical edition available from Teknamic (<https://on.mom/mjLD>) for €25.00

Sometimes in the bustling realms of gaming, a game can hide in the shadows like that one sock that mysteriously vanishes in the laundry. *Devwill* is one of these examples, where CRASH shamefully overlooked this earlier release by the excellent studio, Amaweeks. But behold, all is well with the firmament! As if answering our call, Version 2.0 has descended from the digital heavens, bringing quality-of-life improvements that make this the definitive version to review. There's no time like the present to delve into this missed opportunity. *Devwill Too* is a metroidvania-lite platformer where you control a little devilled homunculus who runs about the landscape leaping on his enemies' heads as he makes his way to wherever he's supposed to be going. By design, numerous paths branch out like trails in a hidden grove. However, many of these routes are inaccessible until our crimson companion obtains the necessary upgrades.



Once obtained, he will have enhanced abilities, unlocking previously inaccessible avenues, and allowing the player to progress further into the realm. The two enhancements that imbue the homunculus are slide attack and double jump.

So with these abilities in mind, it is worth noting areas in the map where you observed an alternative route and backpedalling over in that direction. For added longevity, the game offers an addictive combo score system for each enemy you bounce off consecutively. This game is designed to attract speedrunners who want to complete it quickly while also achieving a high final score.



Criticism

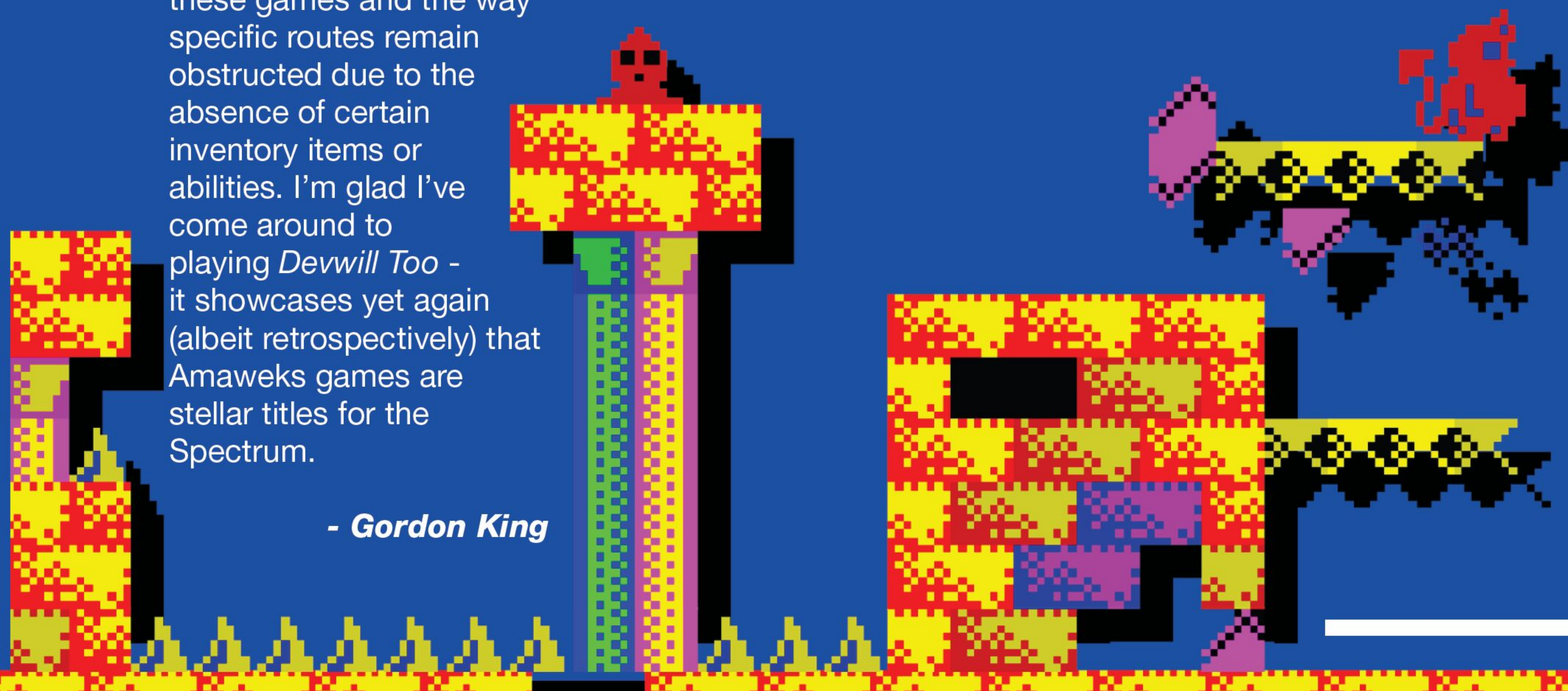
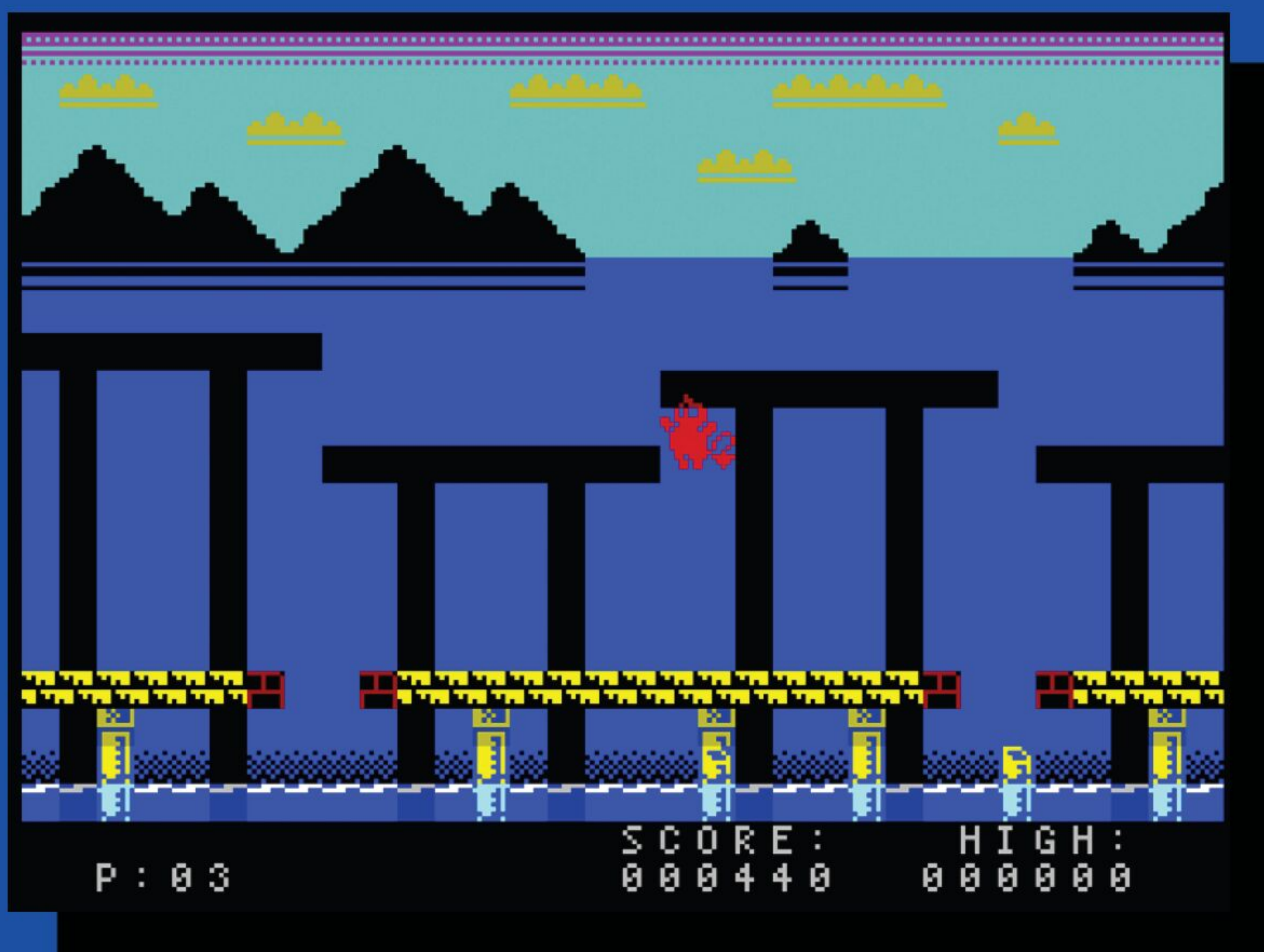
I don't know how I missed playing this gem of a game; being a fan of the other works created by Amaweeks, I need to have a long hard talk with myself. Though I find myself examining this in hindsight and realise the game isn't as accomplished as their later releases, I see the seed of their brilliance in this. As always, the attention to the graphical layout clearly shows the author's understanding of art and design - the game is glorious to observe. I don't mean to imply that it boasts the best graphics - that it certainly doesn't - but it's been, visually considered all the way through, akin to a carefully painted masterpiece. The character's control feels impeccable, allowing you to execute jumps and combos with precision. And now, the highlight: Metroidvania games are my passion. I deeply cherish the essence of these games and the way specific routes remain obstructed due to the absence of certain inventory items or abilities. I'm glad I've come around to playing *Devwill Too* - it showcases yet again (albeit retrospectively) that Amaweeks games are stellar titles for the Spectrum.

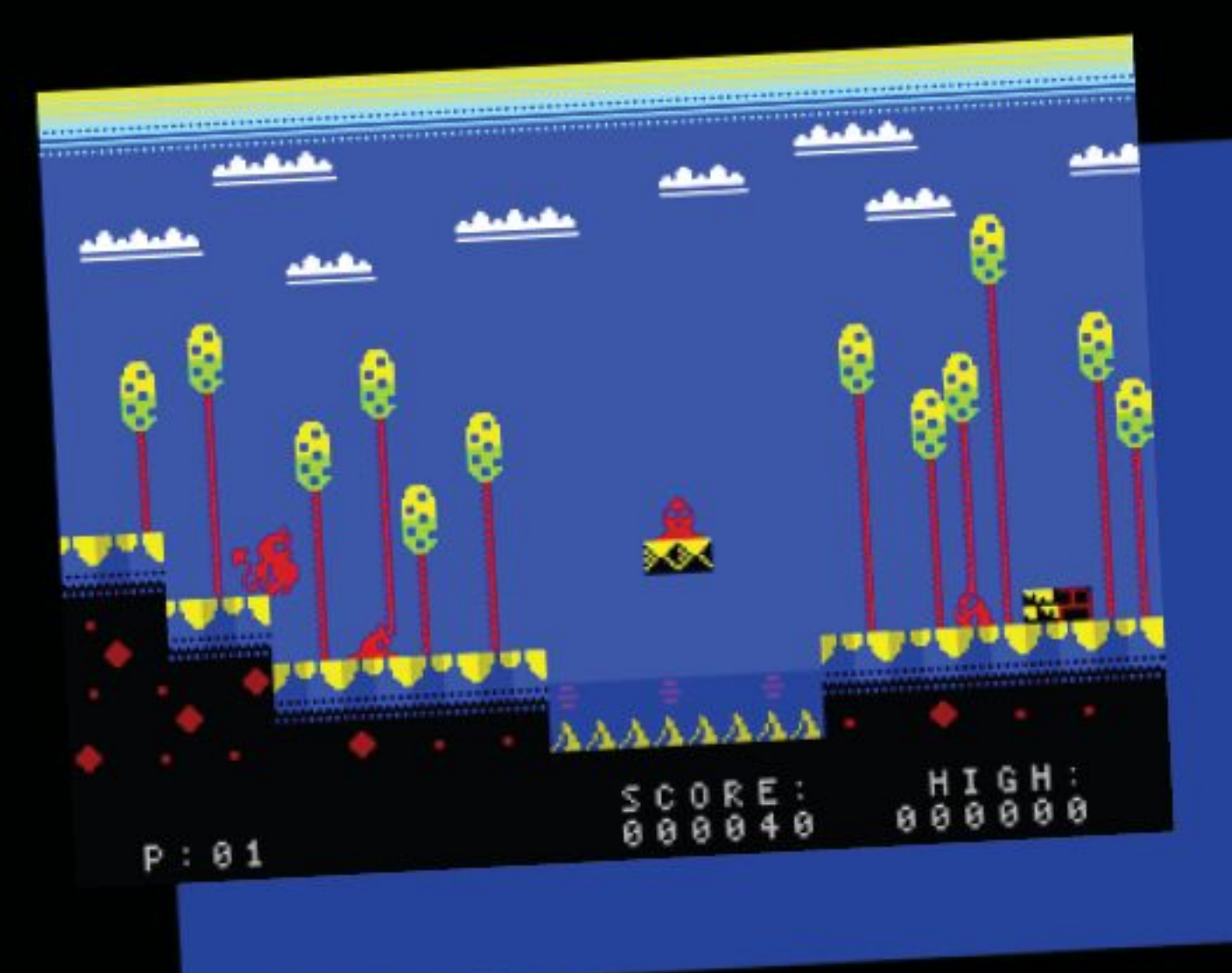
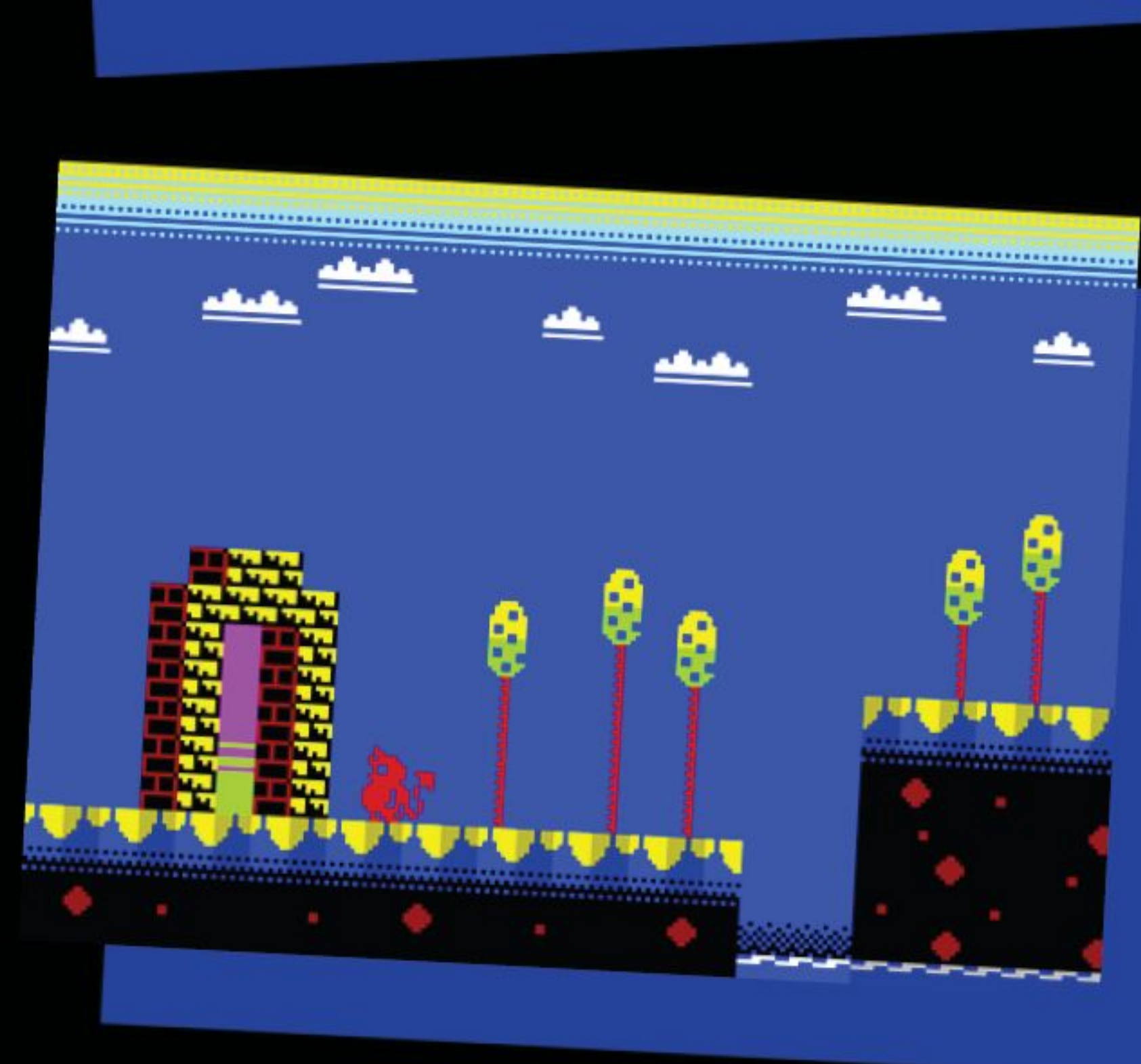
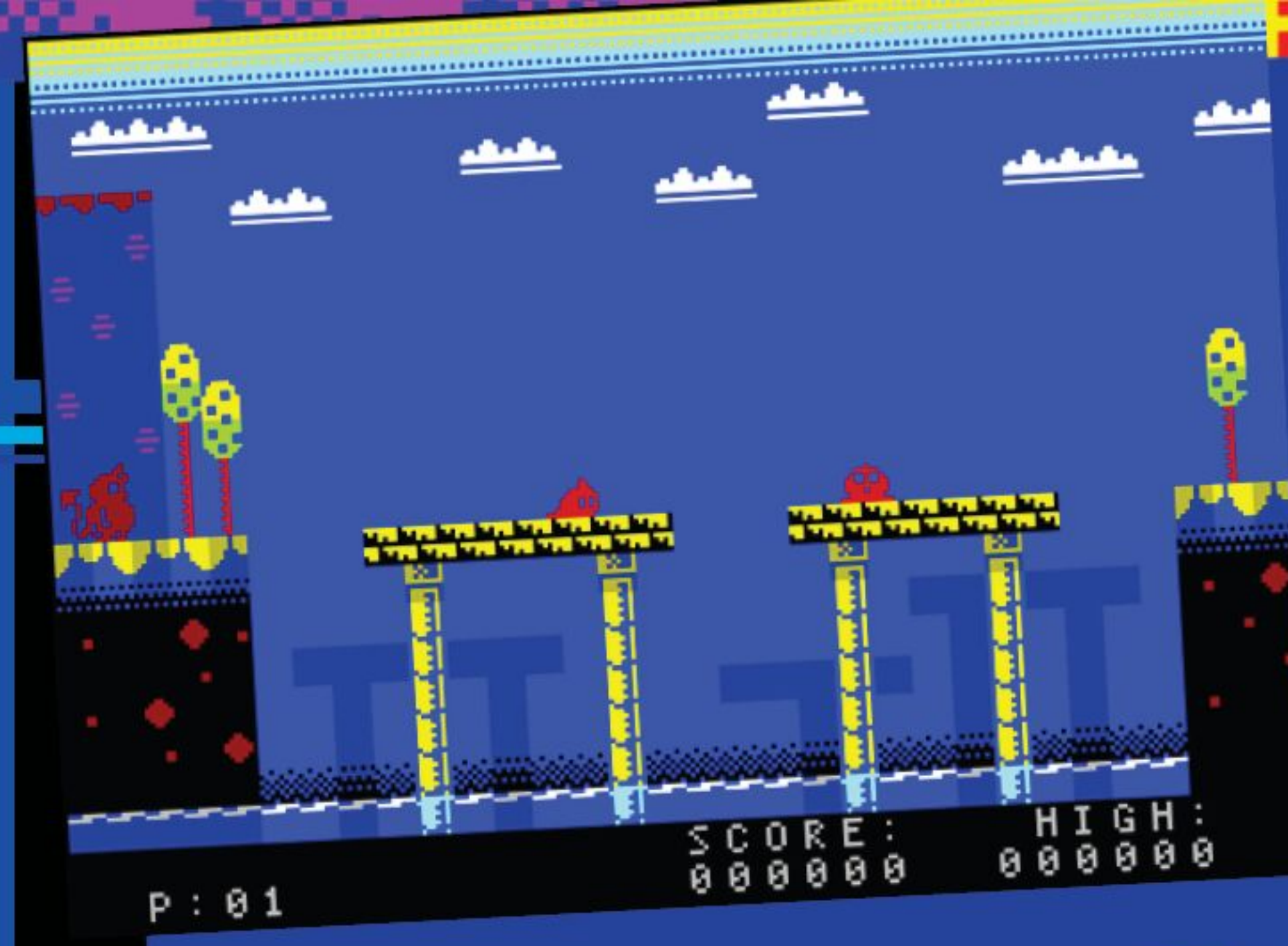
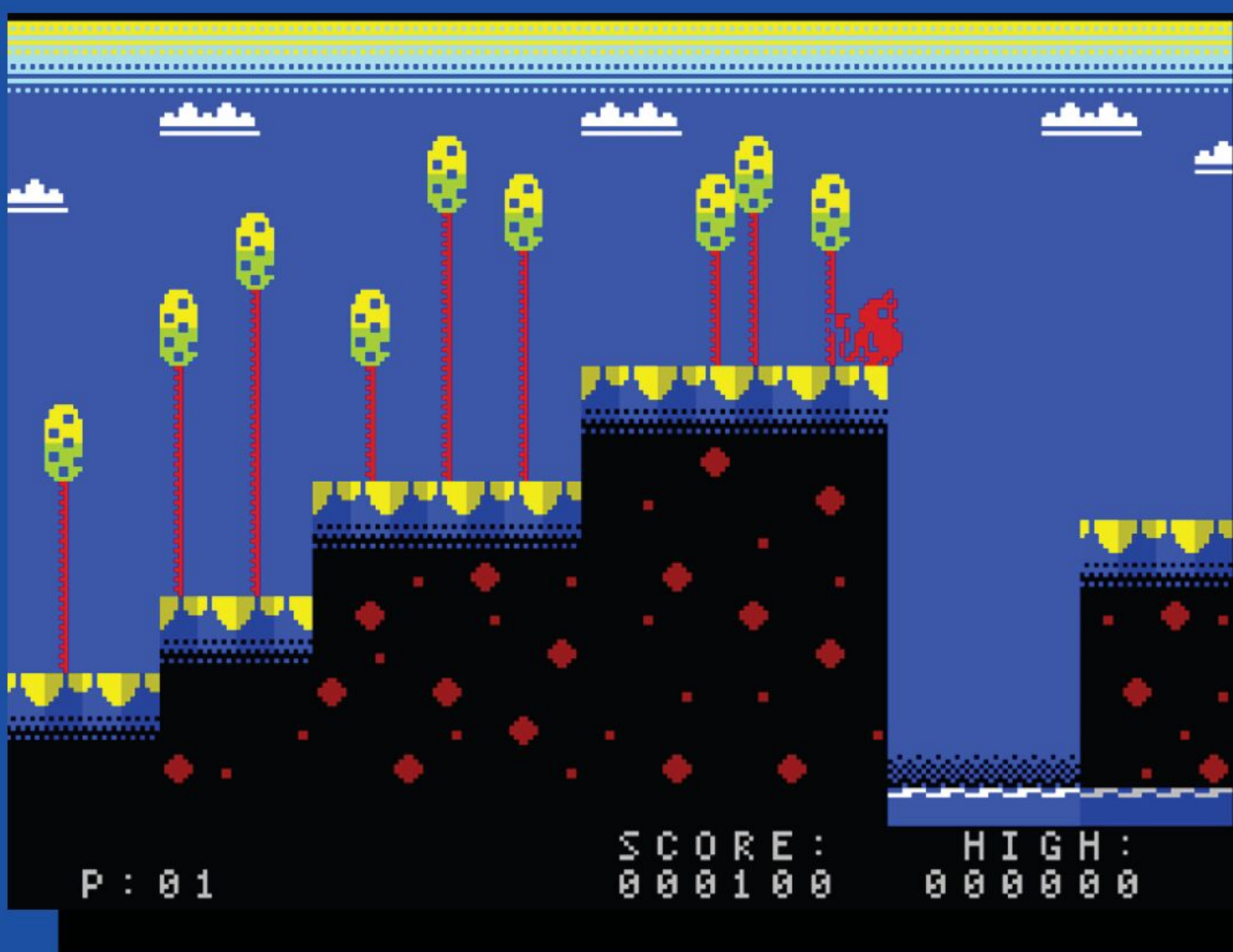
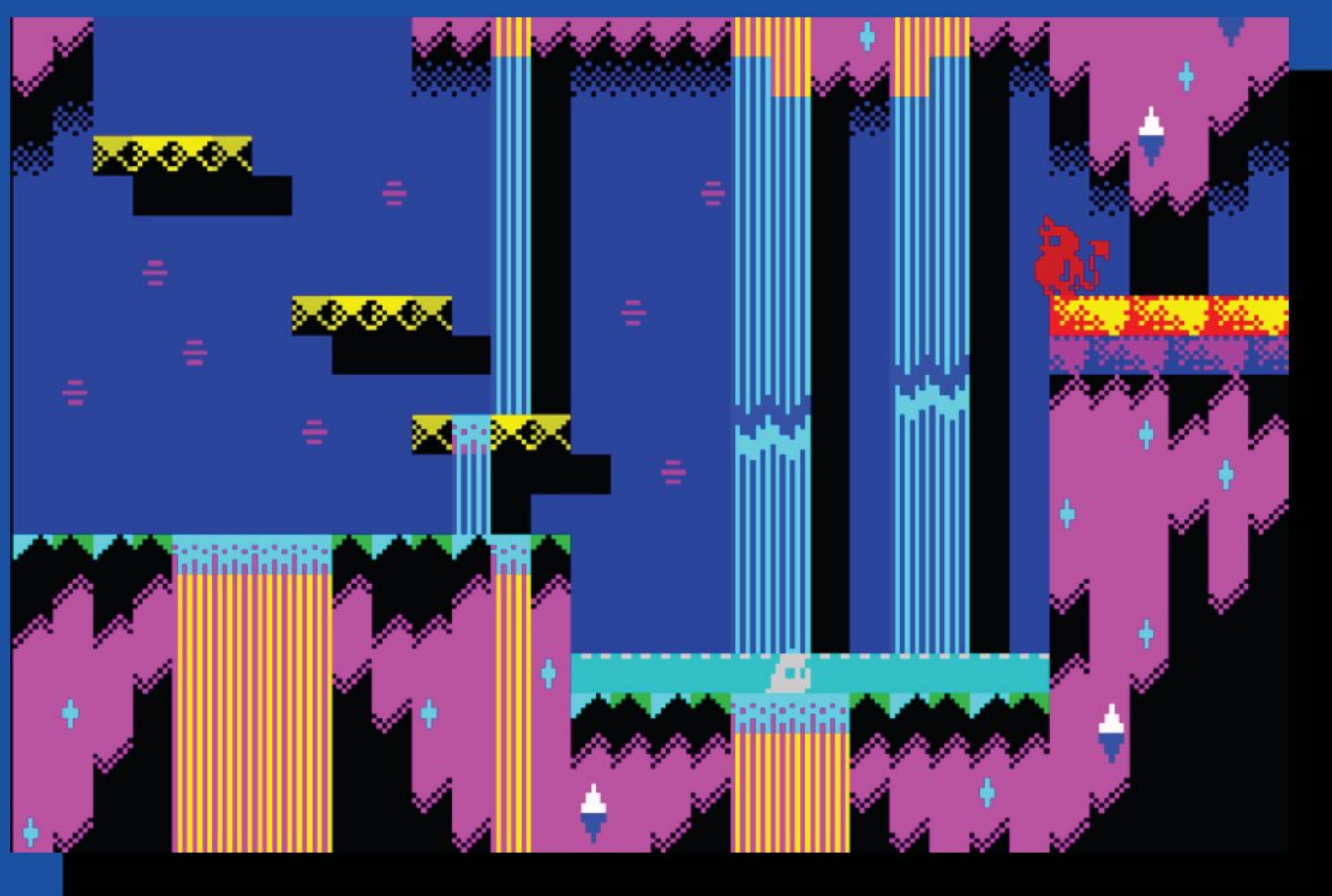
- Gordon King

Paul's Take

They say never follow Satan into the Post Office as the devil takes many forms, though luckily for us, here he is pretty much in the 'getting on with it' mood. Round tum, round bottom, and with a curly pointy tail to boot, you could say the devil has some form entering this game. A nimble little fellow as he bounces across the screen, squashing enemies and smashing through rocks...when he has unlocked that skill, of course.

The game is very bright and colourful with wonderful use of magenta (you really can't have too much), and the music is next level - that funky bassline will have you toe-tapping in no time. Excellent stuff!





Comments

Another quality title from Amaweeks, featuring stunning visuals with glorious colours and brilliant controls. The accompanying music really suits the game well and creates an atmospheric mood. It may be a revised version of an earlier game, but it stands out triumphantly as one of the best games for the Spectrum in 2023

Keyboard: Q,A,O,P & M

Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston

Use of Computer:	90%
Graphics:	91%
Playability:	91%
Getting started:	89%
Addictive Qualities:	89%

Overall: 90%

Nick Robert's PLAYING TIPS



If there's one thing I was always good at in my Crash days it was plugging my own games! So why break the habit of a lifetime? These days my day job is Head of Studio of a mobile game company called Amuzo. By the time you read this we will have published a game we've been working on all year – *Dobble Go!* A digital version of the classic card game. Very proud of it we are too. Do give it a download – free to try... better to buy!

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY

We printed some ace tips to T2 back in issue 96...

● **Level 1** – Kick the baddy until he drops, then come in close and headbutt or knee him!



● **Level 2** – Don't bother with the arrows – just go as far right as you can, staying about halfway up the screen. Don't worry about hitting rocks as there should be

enough life bonuses to keep you going! If you like, occasionally dart to the left to collect extra life and point bonuses, keeping ahead of the truck all of the time. At the end watch the pretty explosions – BOOM!

● **Level 3** – Fiddle Arnie's circuitry about! Quite easy, this. Try to get the pieces down the left-hand side first, then swap the numbers about to light them up. Fiddle with the rest and watch his fingers wiggle. Don't worry if you fail

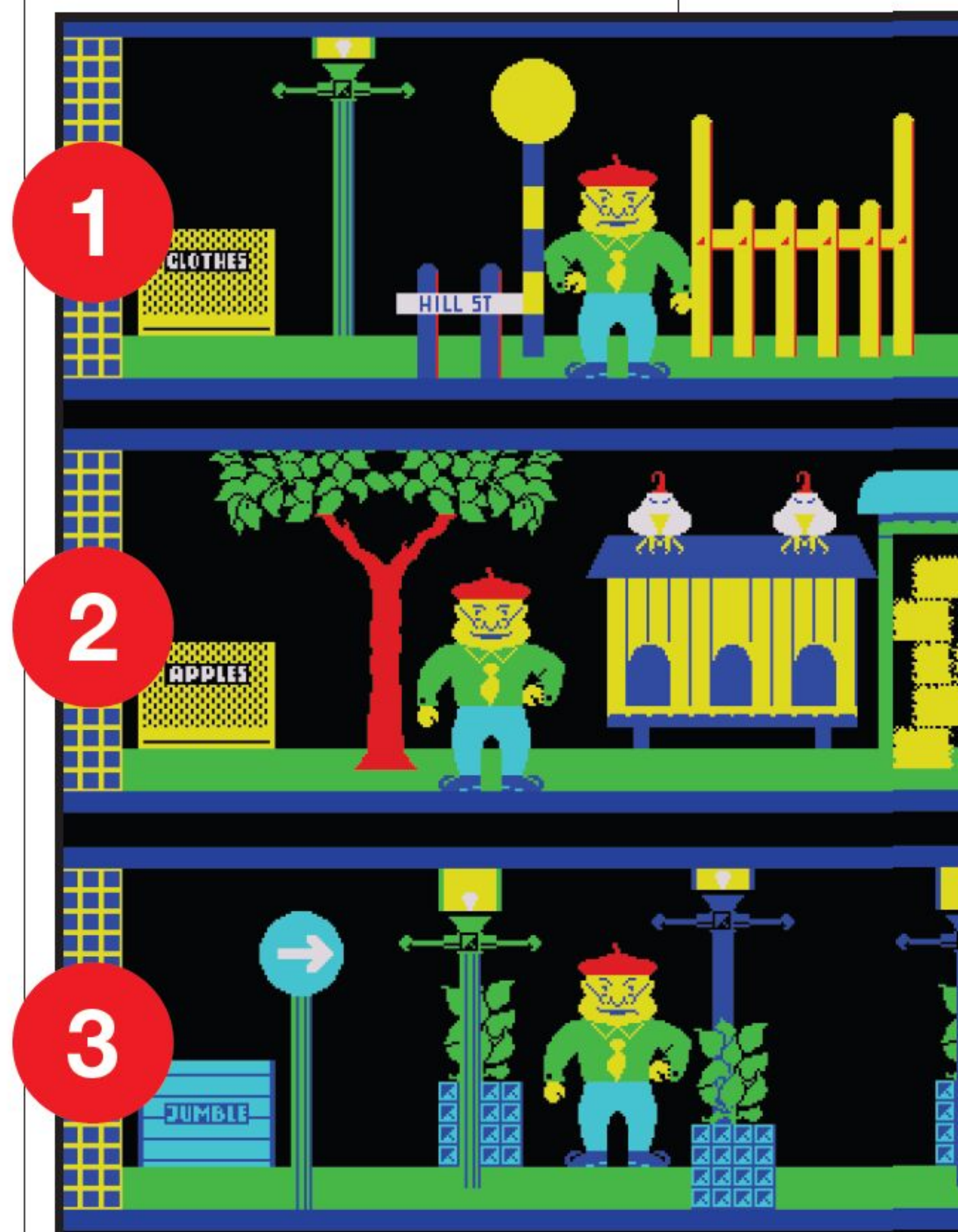


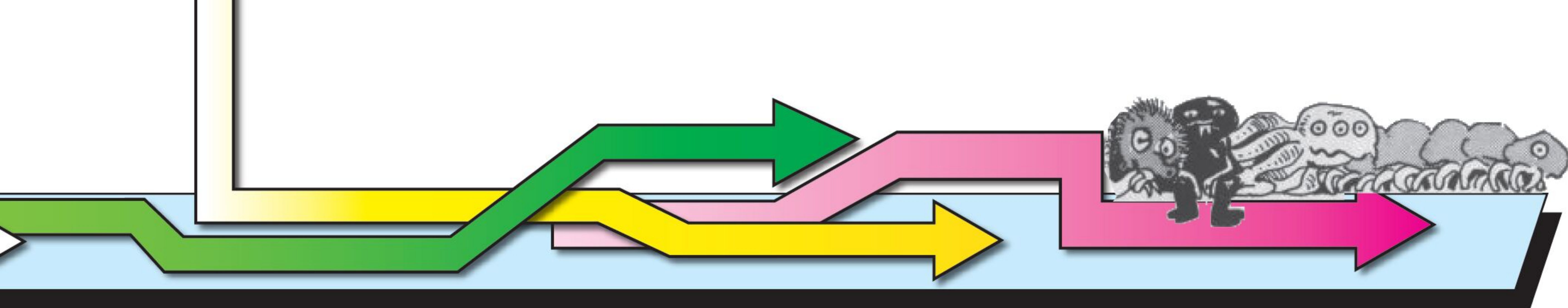
because you'll still reach...

● **Level 4** – Do the same as level one and maybe throw a punch for good measure!

● **Level 5** – This is hard (madam)! Slide the blocks around like mad. Arnie's eye is easiest to complete, but just experiment and try to finish with as many blocks right as possible.

● **Level 6** – Weave your SWAT van around, shooting like mad. Steady it for a few seconds to hit the pursuing chopper. The T1000 is well 'ard!





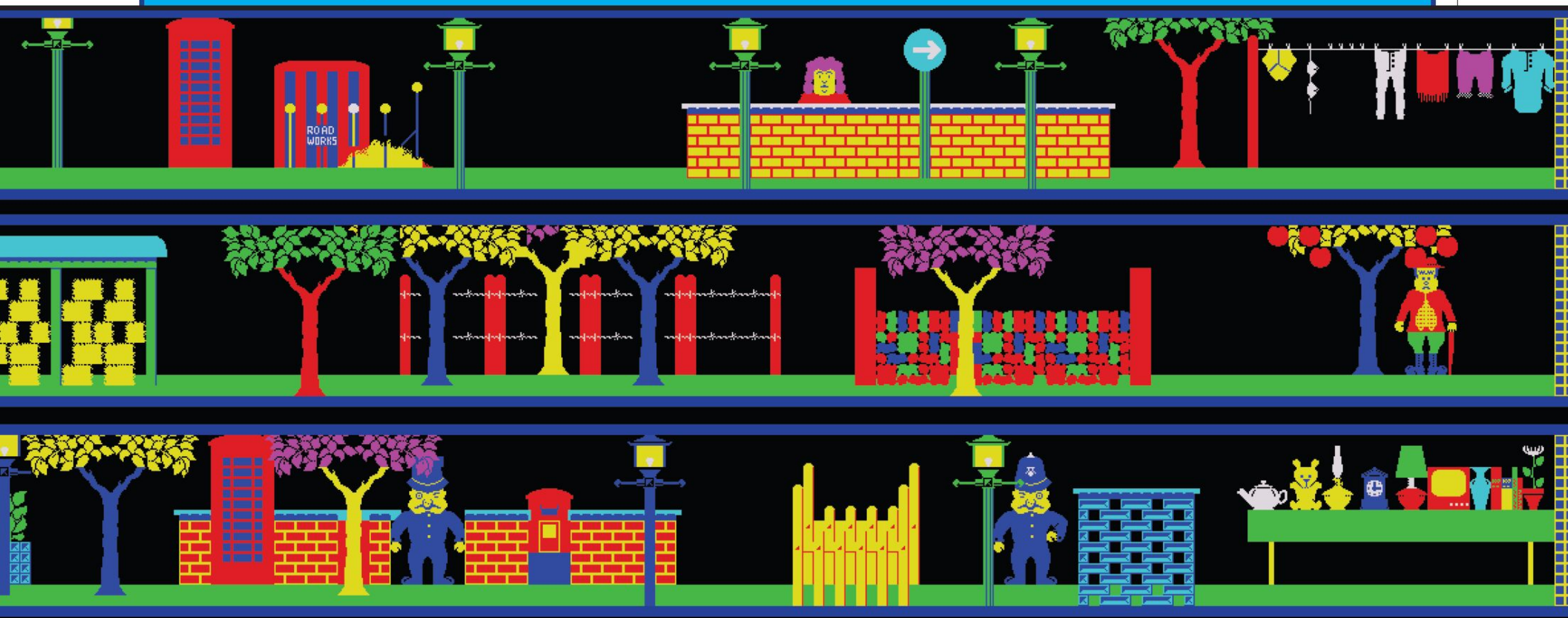
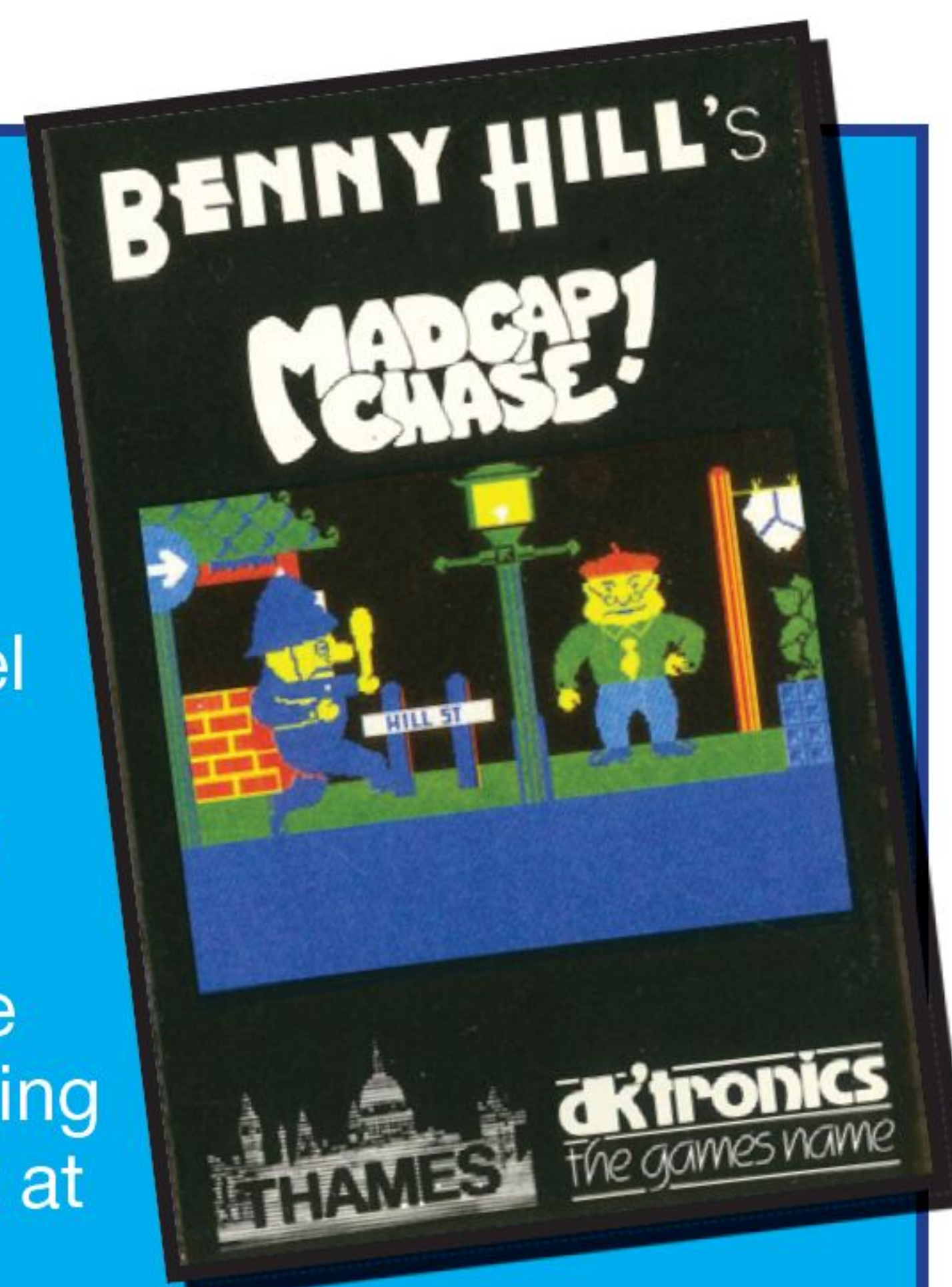
BENNY HILL'S MADCAP CHASE

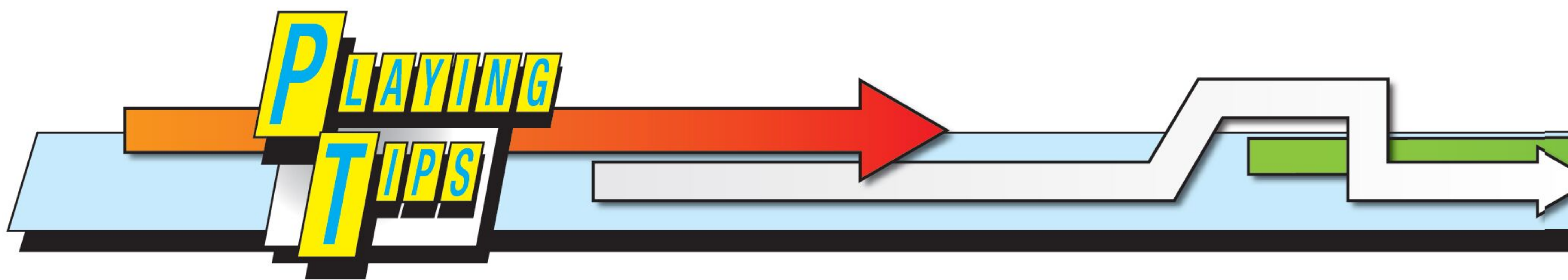
Here's a crazy adventure from 1985 created by legendary game designer Don Priestly! *Benny Hill's Madcap Chase!* again made with Don's big sprite game engine. The map was created by Pavero and shows the three levels plus here are some top tips...

- The levels are split into three 'layers' – top, middle and bottom (a bit like old Barrymore's *Strike It Lucky* – Ed). Benny must run around to find the items that flash their names at the bottom of the screen.
- Jumping between the layers is the key – a lamppost may be on the middle layer, but Benny can pass by without smashing his face on the bottom layer – you get the kind of thing, right?
- Watch out for the people – they are all nutters! Purple-haired ladies, stick wielding farmers, blue helmeted policemen – if any of them come into contact with Benny he's in for a real beating! A bit harsh.
- The game isn't that big, but makes up for this by having you run backwards and forwards through the level to achieve the

objectives. On level one it's all about clothes – grabbing them from the washing line on the far right and returning them to the basket at the beginning.

- Level two is all about the apples – and there are a lot of trees to dodge around. Special care should be taken around the farmer on his tractor – he will run you over for stealing his apples! The "Watch Out" warnings at the bottom will show you which way he's coming!
- Then level three – it's a jumble sale with lots of bric-a-brac to fetch from one side of the level to the box on the other. For some reason the copper thinks you're stealing it, so take extra care around him.
- Beware! Objects you thought were on one layer may now have moved as you flick between the screens.
- Nice big graphics throughout, but what this has to do with Benny Hill is anyone's guess, not even an Ernie the Milkman level!





CURSE OF SHERWOOD

Make yourself immune to Norman weapons with these hacks for *Curse of Sherwood* by Al and Rick from Pirton...

Firstly, **MERGE** “” in the loader and delete line 10. Type

CLEAR 23999 and load in the rest of the code with **LOAD “”CODE**. Then type these POKEs in directly:

POKE 58370,0
POKE 58395,0
POKE 58704,0

followed by...

BORDER 0:
RANDOMIZE USR
35073

and finally enter:
POKE 58370,0
POKE 58704,0
POKE 58381,100
POKE 58703,100
POKE 58395,0
POKE 58379,100

POKE 58385,0
POKE 58705,0

And some clues...

- The scroll with the map is not needed.
- The shield is not needed.
- The club smashes down the door through the teleport.



TOMAHAWK HINTS & TIPS

Flight sims on the Spectrum were an acquired taste, but one that Richard Naylor of Clwyd

obviously liked back in May 1986 when he wrote in with these pearls of wisdom...



● When you are in combat mode speed can be picked up quickly by setting the torque to 100% then dripping the nose of the helicopter by about 30%. Within a short while you'll be moving very quickly indeed.

● A good way to slow down is to roll from left to right or put the pitch up slightly.

● At the beginning

of the game set the weapons to missiles and take off to about 200ft. Then clear an area of a three mile radius. Now descend to the helipad and replenish your missile stocks.

● On mission 4 the landscape is always changing so keep breaking out of the game and re-entering until you get the easiest landscape.

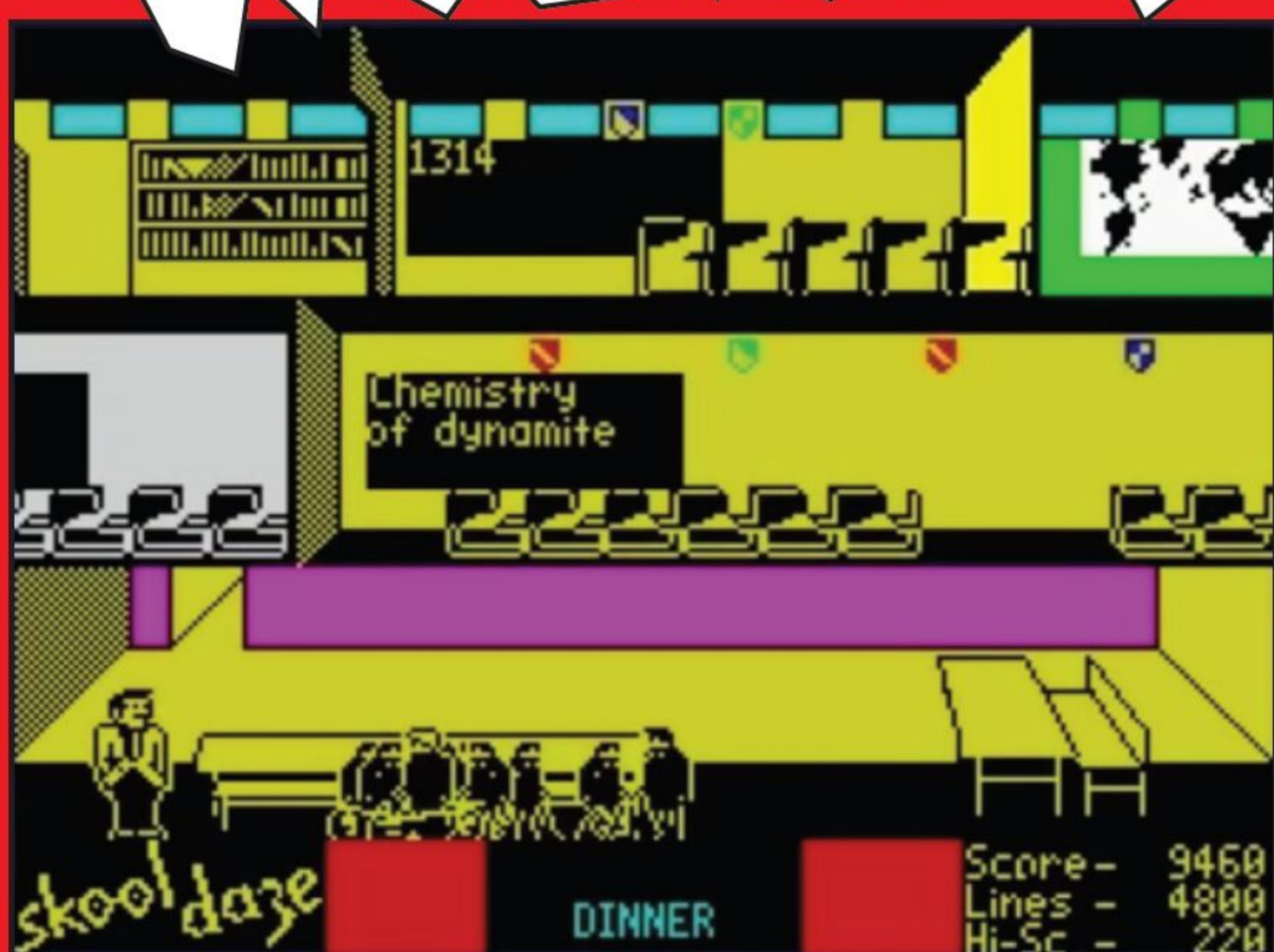
CLASSIC POKES!

Still worth a play today, *Skooldaze* from Microsphere is one of my faves. Here are some POKES from James Mintram...

```

5  REM FIRST PRINTED IN CRASH 69,
   REM OCTOBER 1989
10  CLEAR 65535
20  PRINT TAB 5;"START SKOOLDAZE TAPE";
   REM 15,0
30  LET T=0
40  FOR F=32972 TO 33085: READ A: POKE
   REM F,A: LET T=T+A: NEXT F
50  IF T<>14253 THEN BEEP 1,0: PRINT
   REM "ERROR": STOP
60  RANDOMIZE USR 1366
70  RANDOMIZE USR 1366
80  RANDOMIZE USR 30000
100 DATA 243, 062, 008, 211, 254
110 DATA 001, 023, 000, 217, 221
120 DATA 033, 255, 063, 017, 186
130 DATA 064, 049, 203, 129, 006
140 DATA 200, 205, 042, 129, 254
150 DATA 213, 048, 247, 205, 042
160 DATA 129, 046, 001, 205, 039
170 DATA 129, 254, 223, 063, 203
180 DATA 021, 006, 208, 048, 244
190 DATA 006, 210, 024, 000, 221
200 DATA 117, 000, 122, 179, 221
210 DATA 035, 027, 032, 228, 221
220 DATA 054, 066, 016, 024, 222
230 DATA 221, 124, 254, 129, 040
240 DATA 003, 221, 117, 204, 217
250 DATA 221, 009, 217, 027, 123
260 DATA 178, 032, 204, 062, 201
270 DATA 050, 192, 249, 195, 224
280 DATA 094, 205, 042, 129, 062
290 DATA 013, 061, 032, 253, 004
300 DATA 040, 140, 219, 254, 169
310 DATA 230, 064, 040, 246, 121
320 DATA 047, 079, 120, 201

```



NEMESIS

Who doesn't love a Konami classic, eh? They've been doing it since 1981 and *Nemesis* was one of their best arcade machines! The Speccy version wasn't half bad either, created by Stuart Ruecroft in 1987.

● Want a cheat? Start a two-player game and battle through to level two or higher. When you start over again, player two will continue on the level they left off at! (Err – I think that's a bug, not a cheat – Ed).

● OK, how about some POKES for

that Multiface contraption? Press that red button and POKE these areas...

Infinite Lives
POKE 51949,0

Immunity
POKE 51479,1

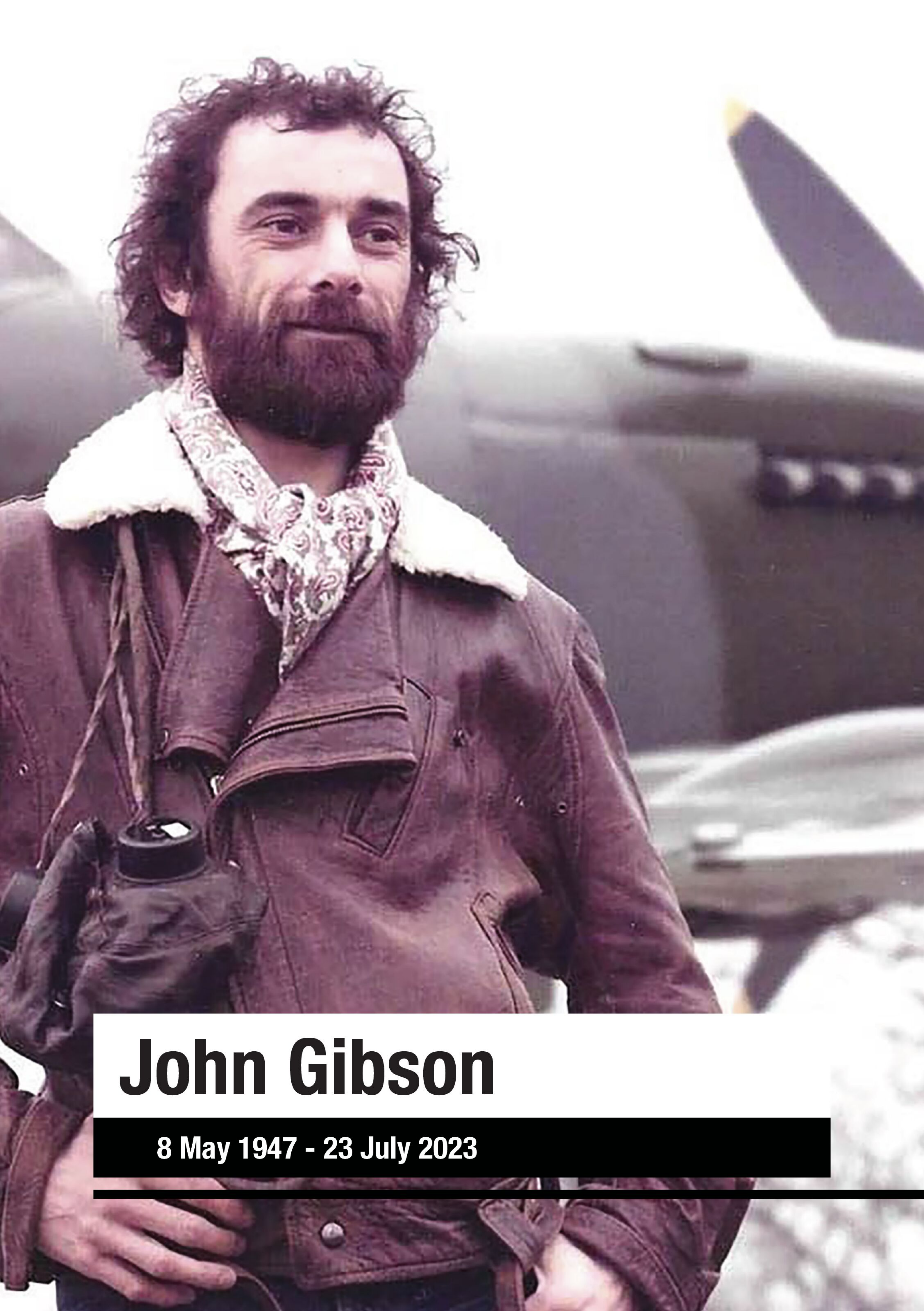
Number of Lives in one player mode
POKE 52977,x

Number of Lives in two player mode
POKE 53016,x

Not got a Multiface? Then try typing this instead before you load the game from tape...

57 POKE 51949,0
100 MERGE "": RUN

Have you got any playing tips, cheats or POKES to share? Email Nick at: tips@crashmagazine.co.uk



John Gibson

8 May 1947 - 23 July 2023

John Gibson began his career as a games programmer back in 1983, where he worked for Liverpool based developer, Imagine Software. After the well documented collapse of Imagine, he and four other ex-Imagine employees, set up Denton Designs, where they developed such titles as Gift From The Gods, Frankie Goes To Hollywood & Transformers for Ocean Software.

John continued to work in the industry up until just a few years ago, eventually finding a home at the now disbanded Evolution Studios, where he worked on the much loved Motorstorm and DriveClub games. John was one of the most beloved figures of that classic era of Spectrum development and his loss will resonate with many, far beyond his immediate family and friends.

In this tribute, Simon Butler recounts his memories of John and reflects on why he holds such a place in the hearts of those who knew him.

Time waits for no man and as the years fly by those we've met on our travels are taken and the roster grows ever shorter. John Gibson joined an ever-growing list of stalwarts from the games industry this year.

I have been called on to say something nice about him. It's probably the easiest task I have ever undertaken.

Short, bewhiskered, personable, charming, tolerant of Scousers and incredibly talented. These were the first things that sprang to mind when I started this piece and yet they don't come close to defining a man I am proud to claim was my friend.

He was one of the very first people I met when entering this crazy circus we call the video games industry. Introduced to me by my other great friend, the larger than life and perpetually missed Steve Cain, John, if I remember correctly greeted me with the words "Not another f*cking Scouser!"

After that it became my perpetual mission to irritate him as much as possible as often as possible with cliched Cockney jibes, which were always met with a torrent of razor-sharp anti-Scouser ripostes.

Our relationship went beyond games as John and I shared a love of music and we often shot the breeze about bands we both liked or butted heads over bands we disagreed on.



They may be smiling now, but they are about to encounter...

PSYCLAPSE & BANDERSNATCH COMMODORE 64 48K SPECTRUM

How will these four master computer game writers be feeling in a few weeks time?

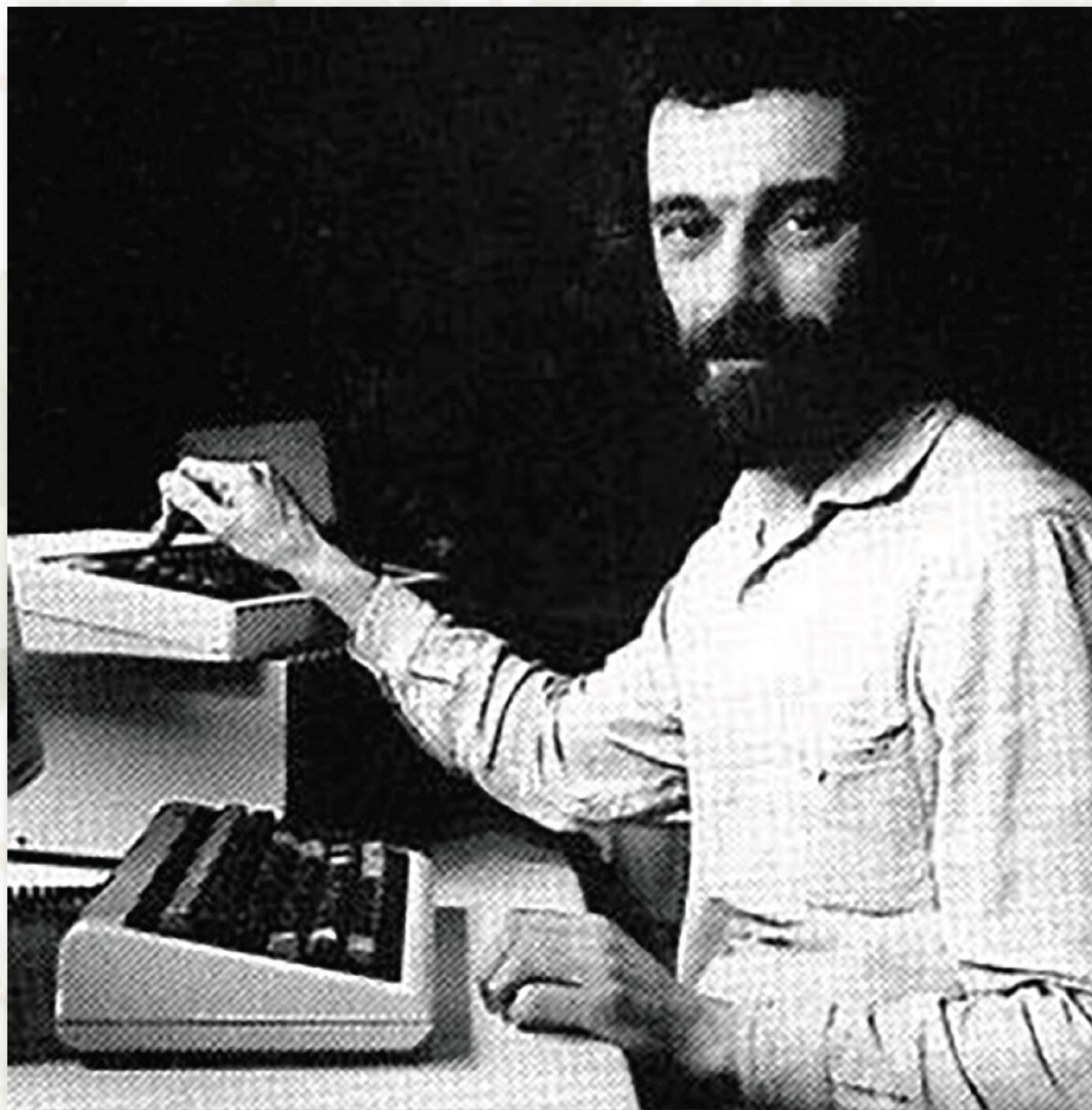
When such computer wizards as (from left to right) Ian Weatherburn, Mike Glover, John Gibson and Eugene Evans are locked away for weeks on end, anything can happen, will they maintain their sanity, or whats more to the point can you control your patience?

They have been brought together to pool their awesome talents to create the two most sensational, mind boggling games ever imagined...**Psychapse and Bandersnatch**.

Coming soon from Imagine...Psychapse and Bandersnatch... the two most exhilarating experiences ever. Can you wait?

Imagine Software Limited, 5 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L1 6BW.
Dealer Enquiries Contact: Colin Stokes on 051-236 8100 (20 lines).

John (second from right) was a part of the team who worked on the ambitious Bandersnatch project.



technologically speaking, sing his praises most highly and they are many.

We collaborated in strange ways while never actually working on projects together. I would throw my strange ideas around related to whatever he was involved with at the time and occasionally he would be gracious enough to justify me flapping my gums by including them into his games.

I annoyed him intensely, which was unsurprising, but the reason I mention this is that he was less than amused when I completed *Stonkers* in short-order time and by some method that John felt was both unfair and impossible. This irritation was repeated several years later when I did the same thing testing his Atari ST title *Prince*.

He was exceptionally proud of his achievements and rightly so, but our head to head was over in mere minutes as I threw guile and subtlety out of the window and emerged victorious while John invented new and exceptionally salty epithets to describe my family's entire lineage.

But through it all we remained friends. Our paths diverged through the industry and John's star only rose higher with time.



In 2013, John participated in the *Ocean: The History* book.

John liked rock music, fast cars and exotic cigarettes. He was a character. People liked John for a variety of reasons, the main one being that he was just a genuinely nice guy.

At the tender age of 38, John earned the nickname of "granddad" amongst his Imagine colleagues.

He was a great conversationalist, intelligent and engaging and his tales were fascinating, amusing and seemingly endless.

I met John at Imagine and although my working days there were exceptionally few, I was a regular visitor to the office and was witness to him working on the doomed mega-game *Bandersnatch*.

I am eminently unqualified to speak of John's coding abilities but those who are the polar opposite of me

In an industry filled with characters, John Gibson's reputation as a coder and all-round decent person cut through the outrageous and the odd and the list of people I met who knew him or who knew of him by word of mouth grew ever longer.

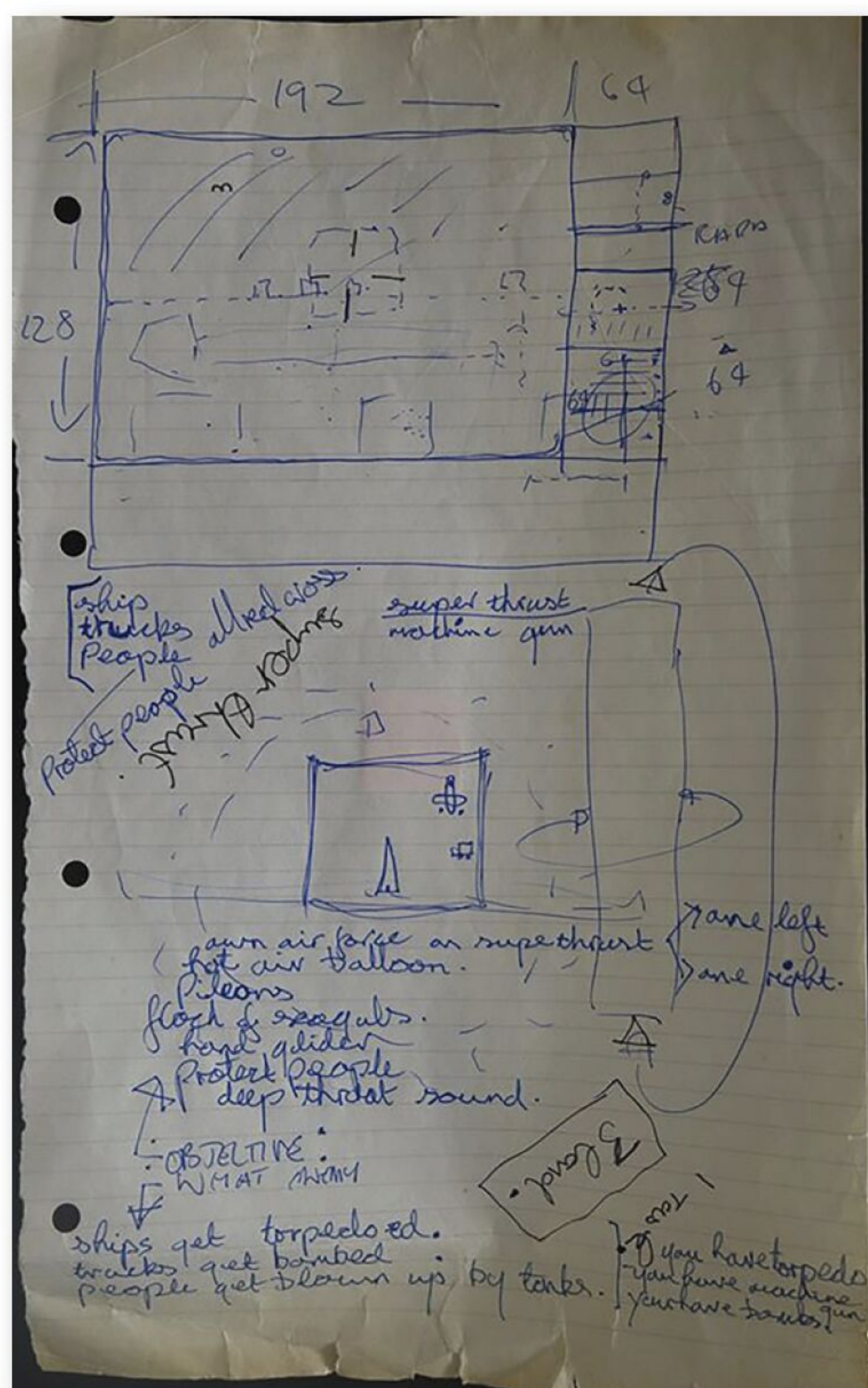
He was never an A-list celebrity and never created what some may call "classics", but I personally have little truck with such nonsense. There are good coders and good games and at times some are better than most, but the words legend and "classic" are mere hyperbole. John Gibson was a veteran. He served his time in the trenches at Imagine and was ill-served by the powers-that-be, but from their tomfoolery we got Dentons and that was the second step on a journey through the industry that lasted four decades, something that some of his peers from those days never attained.

He was pernickety and precise. A stickler for detail. He was universally liked and spoken of with great affection by those fortunate enough to know him well.

John and I spoke intermittently once our paths went in different directions but in the last two years after his retirement and relocation to Thailand, we began discussing a new version of Stonkers for the ZX Spectrum Next. Pixels were plotted and delivered and then communications ceased.

John finally reached out to me and outlined his unfortunately serious health issues. I could do nothing but send him my deepest regrets and wish him the best.

Messages after that were few and far between but I always kept him in my heart and thoughts, but on the 23rd of July he stepped



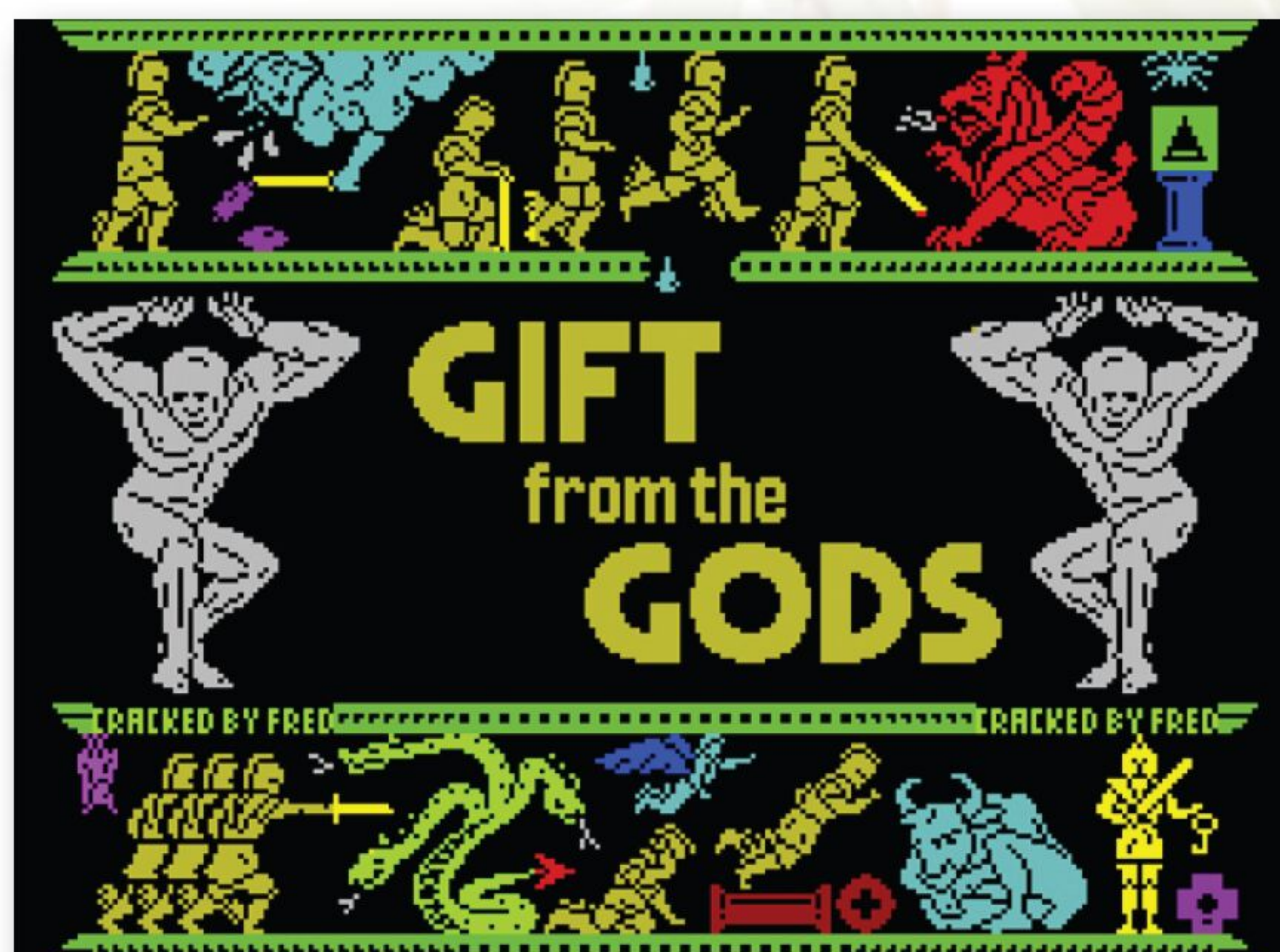
John's development notes for Zzoom.

into that other room that is waiting for us all. My only thoughts were that I hoped his passing was peaceful as he deserved no less.

He was a gentleman, as warm and engaging as few of us are lucky to know and the world is a little more grey without him here. I was fortunate to call him my friend, something I share with a staggering list of people within the industry and beyond.

He was one of the founding Fathers of the Industry and I miss him deeply. Shine on Gibbo, you truly were a star!

- Simon Butler



Of all the titles delivered by Denton Designs, John held up Gift Of The Gods as his personal favourite.

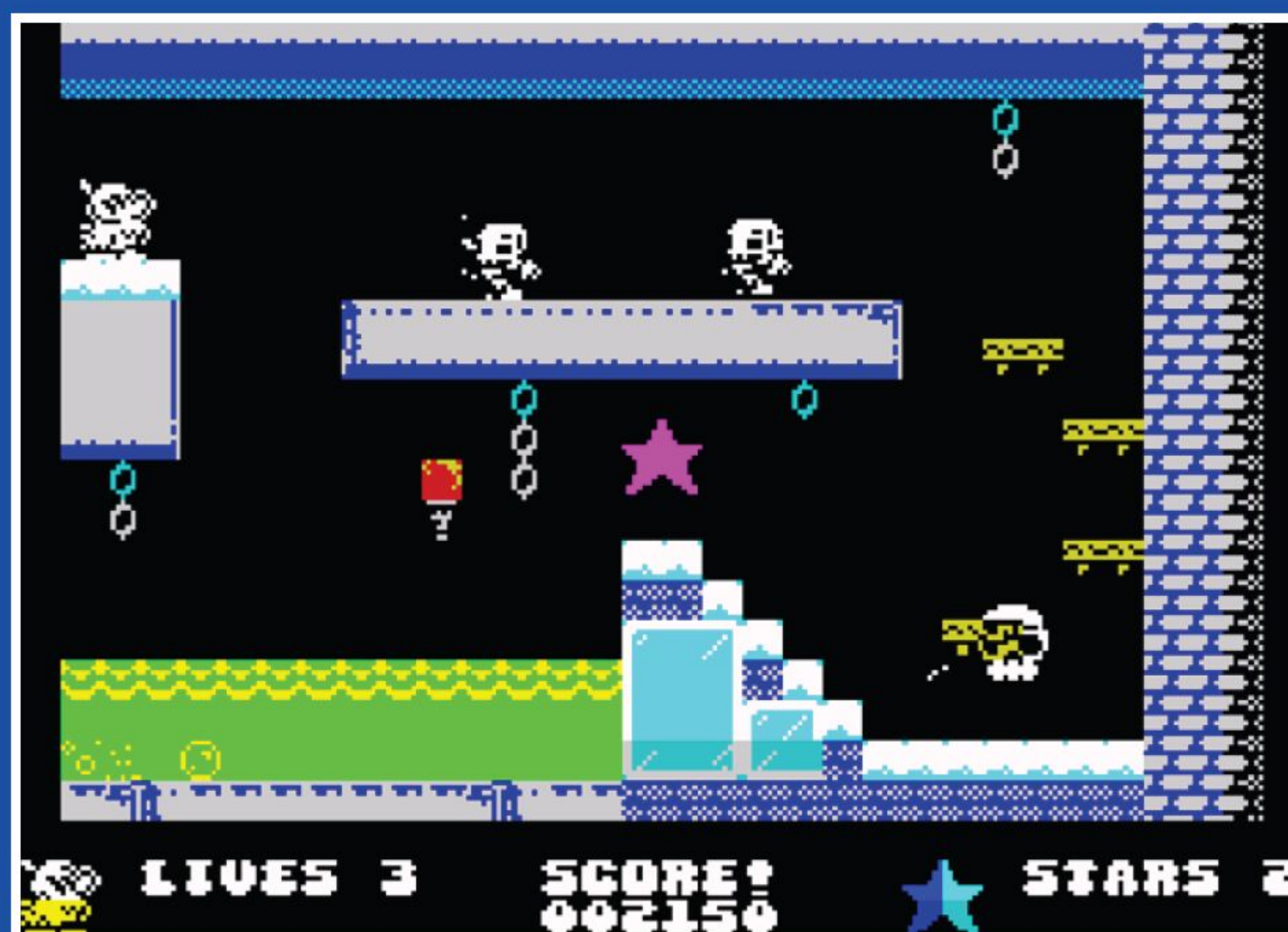


AB-UltraNarwhal

£ DONATION • JULY 2023 • 48K / 128K

DOWNLOAD: <https://on.mom/kdCH>

Everyone's favourite courier duck has returned for another adventure. No cluck-ups, just efficient courier ducks at your service; this is Aura's motto, as she strives to be the best collection and delivery service with webbed feet. In this adventure, a mysterious note and sword fall from the sky, asking the finder to collect the five scattered stars. Of course, it's Aura who stumbles across the vague, scribbled request. With her 'ask no questions' policy, she embarks on a mission to gather up the missing stars - not forgetting to pick up the sword. Following the same style of gameplay as its predecessor, *Duckstoma 2* offers a multi-route platformer. Aura is assisted, yet again, by her explosive eggs, which help her jump higher to those hard-to-reach places. This time around, the aforementioned sword is available at your command to fend off the nasties roaming the play area - this is a new and welcome addition to the game. The stars, of course, are always in the hardest-to-reach places. Thankfully, Aura has energy levels and lives to enable her to see her assignment to completion. Save points are also scattered around the map, so remember to save regularly. This way, you won't have to backtrack through areas you've already traversed.





Criticism

This latest adventure doesn't break the mould of the original, and perhaps that's a positive aspect. *Duckstroma* (part 1) was undeniably charming, although it might have been somewhat limited in its scope. This version is undoubtedly more ambitious, granting players the ability to engage in combat rather than just avoiding it. Progress is also hindered by locked-off areas, where Aura must find switches to activate. The choice of route to go is a great way to make a

platform game seem less linear, and this title has many of those. The sprites remain as sharply defined as they were in the previous game, and the gameplay and handling are as expected. Although the 128K music is impressive, it still falls short when compared to the fantastic tune we experienced from the original. Sequels don't always fare well, but this one still captures the magic.

- **Gordon King**

Paul's Take

She's quack! I mean... she's back! Aura returns on a new adventure and it's as pretty as the previous one. Now having the option/choice of which path to take as you seek out the stars of your quest, does add an extra dimension to things, which is welcomed.

Although *Duckstroma 2* is a pretty little thing, it doesn't really break any new moulds but if you're after a nice-looking platform game where exploding eggs are the order of the day, then look no further.



Comments

Duckstroma remains graphically pretty and very colourful, with lots of different sprites. In the audio department, the 128K tune will please the ears, but it's got tough competition from the original's music. Overall, this is a nicely polished game but doesn't stray too much off the already well-trodden path of its predecessor.

Keyboard: Q,A,O,P & M

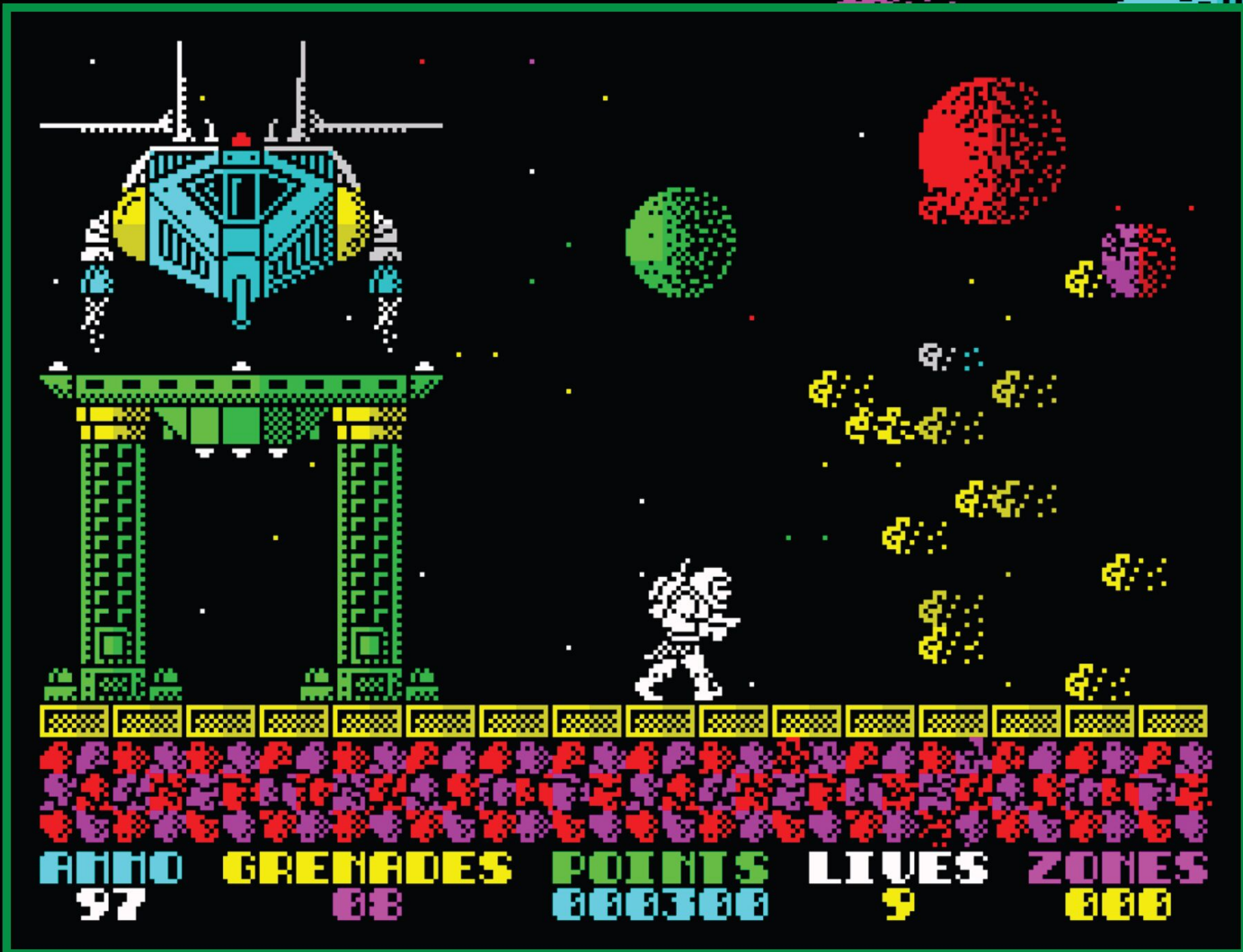
Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston

Use of Computer:	79%
Graphics:	78%
Playability:	80%
Getting started:	79%
Addictive Qualities:	78%

Overall: **78%**



Having refined his skills at Mikro-Gen with the colourful Cop-Out and Equinox, in 1987, coder Raffaele Cecco burst into the big time with this brilliant run 'n' gun game for Hewson. Full of astonishingly vivid colours, dramatic explosions and non-stop action, this is the story of Exolon, as told in the pages of the world's greatest ZX Spectrum magazine.



The Game

You are Vitorc, a mighty and heavily-armed warrior on a mission to traverse 125 screens of aliens, armoured fortifications, powerful pneumatic hammers and deadly mines. Vitorc possesses two methods of attack: a blaster for weak organic forms and grenades for destroying gun emplacements and rock obstructions. Both weapons have limited ammunition, but fortunately, resupply crates appear at timely points, and Vitorc will occasionally encounter a large booth. Hop into this and press up, and the hero dons a hyper-alloy exoskeleton with extra firepower and protection, thus becoming... *Exolon!*



Preview

"As the pictures show, *Exolon's* graphics are colourful – what you can't see is that they're also wonderfully animated," we enthused in issue 42's preview of *Exolon*. "Certainly, everyone in the office enjoyed playing the preview, and now we can't wait for a production version." In those mouth-watering screens, Vitorc launches a grenade at a gun emplacement, with teleporters, pneumatic hammers and more completing the picture. It all looked exciting and very – well – colourful.

VITORC OF AVALON

EXOLON

Hewson

end of August £9.75

A SPACE SHIP hovers overhead, the skies are bright from exploding missiles, rampaging rockets streak through the air, the deathly smell of danger is all around... Thus starts *Exolon*, the latest 'planet-bound battle game' written by Raffaele Cecco and

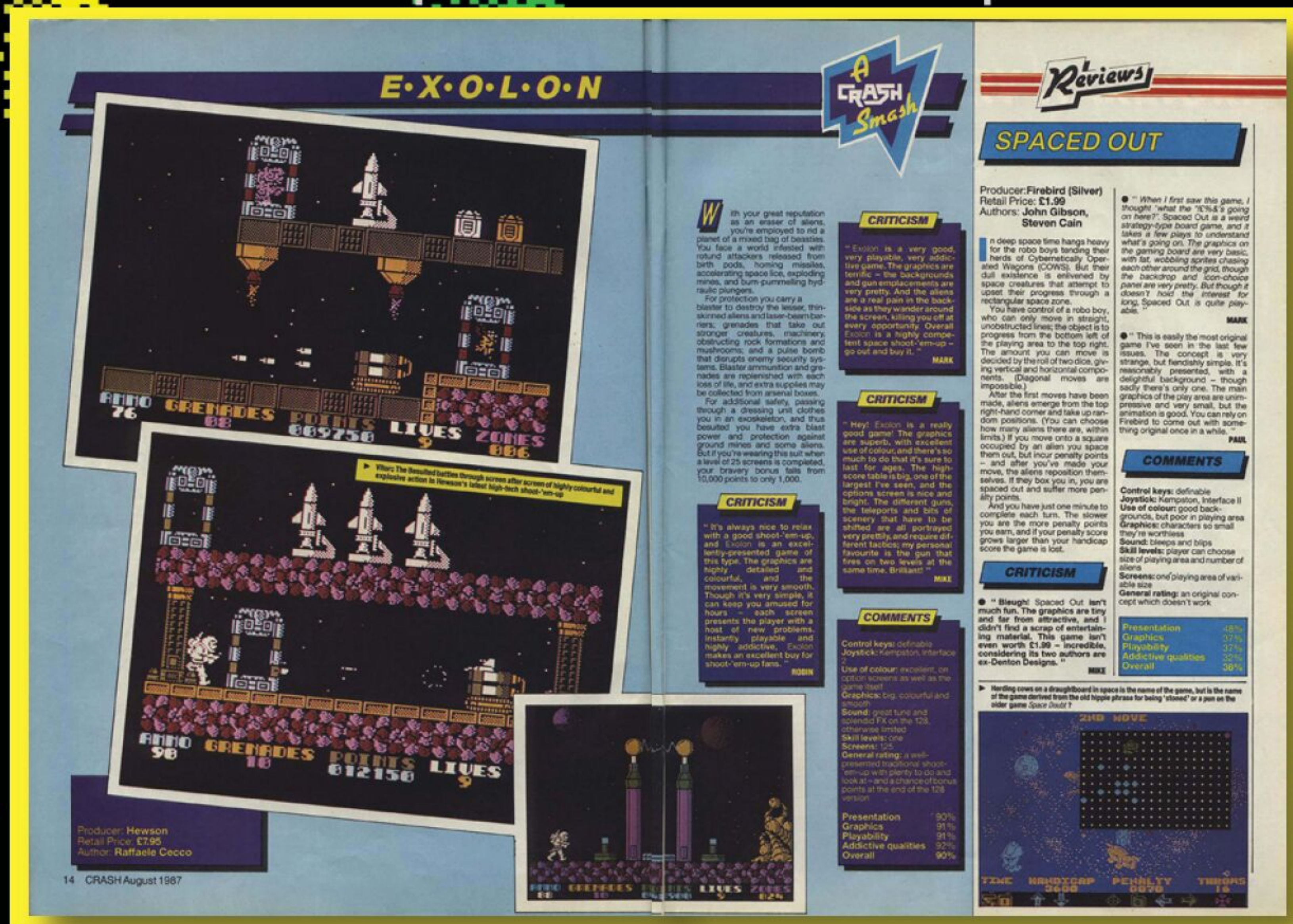
coming soon courtesy of Hewson. In *Exolon* you star as Vitorc, a nice enough guy, who for no other reason than he wants to has decided to rid the planet of marauding aliens. Armed with a deadly rocket launcher and laser system (cunningly disguised as a backpack) you must duck, dodge,

Large and superbly detailed graphics are all a part of *Exolon's* fast-paced action.

slither and generally blast. Both weapons will be used at some point in the game, the laser to kill fast-moving aliens and the rocket launcher to destroy gun turrets and other such unpleasanties. Set on five levels, each consisting of 25 screens, *Exolon* features teleporters (get you to other parts of the screen), grenades, double-barrelled gun emplacements, land mines, homing missiles and pod aliens; once shot they split open to release an entire warband of mini aliens, not too dissimilar to the pods featured in age-old Defender games. As the pictures show, *Exolon's* graphics are colourful – what you can't see is that they're also wonderfully animated. Certainly everyone in the office enjoyed playing the preview copy, and now we can't wait for a production version.

CRASH July 1987 101

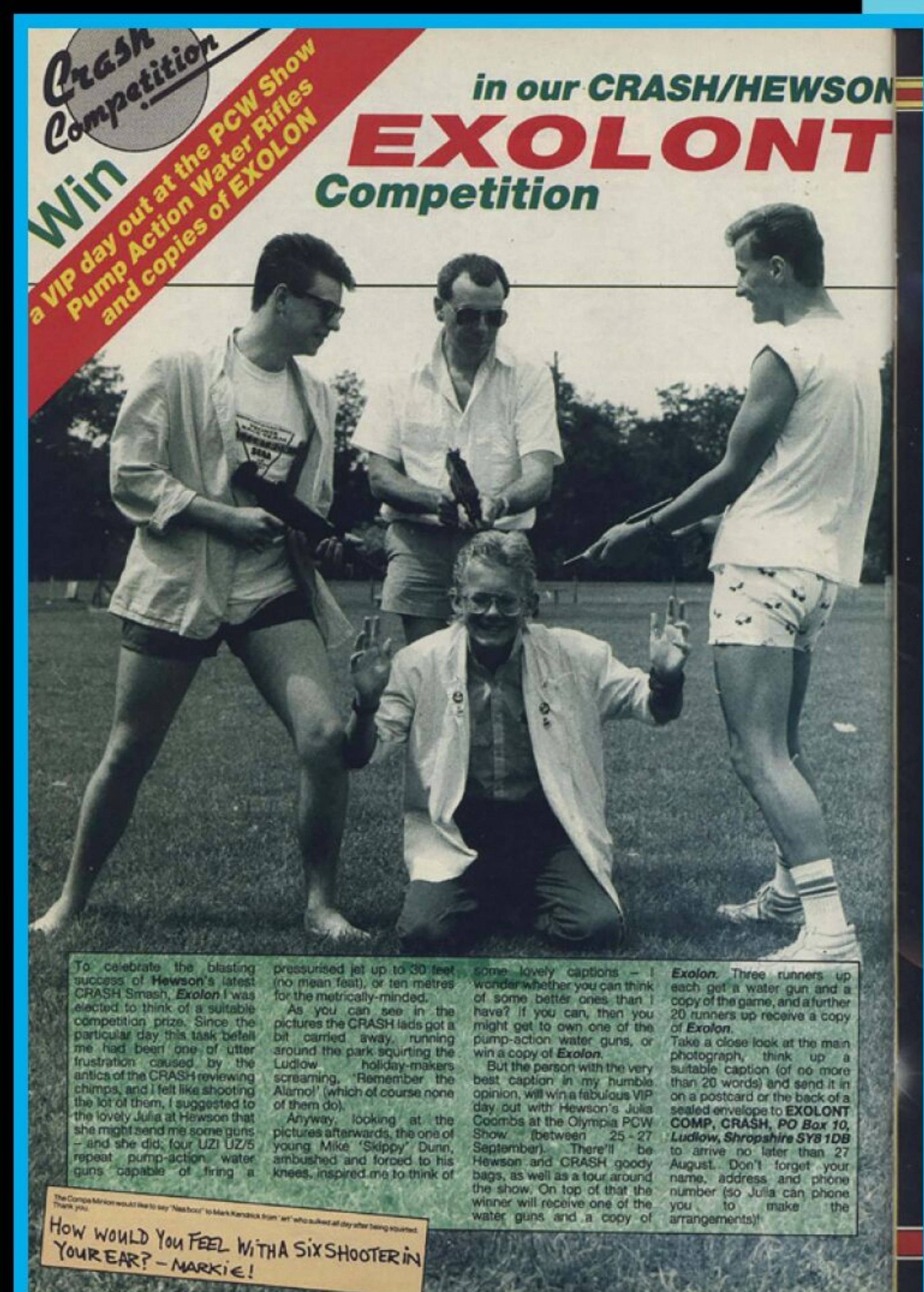
The Review

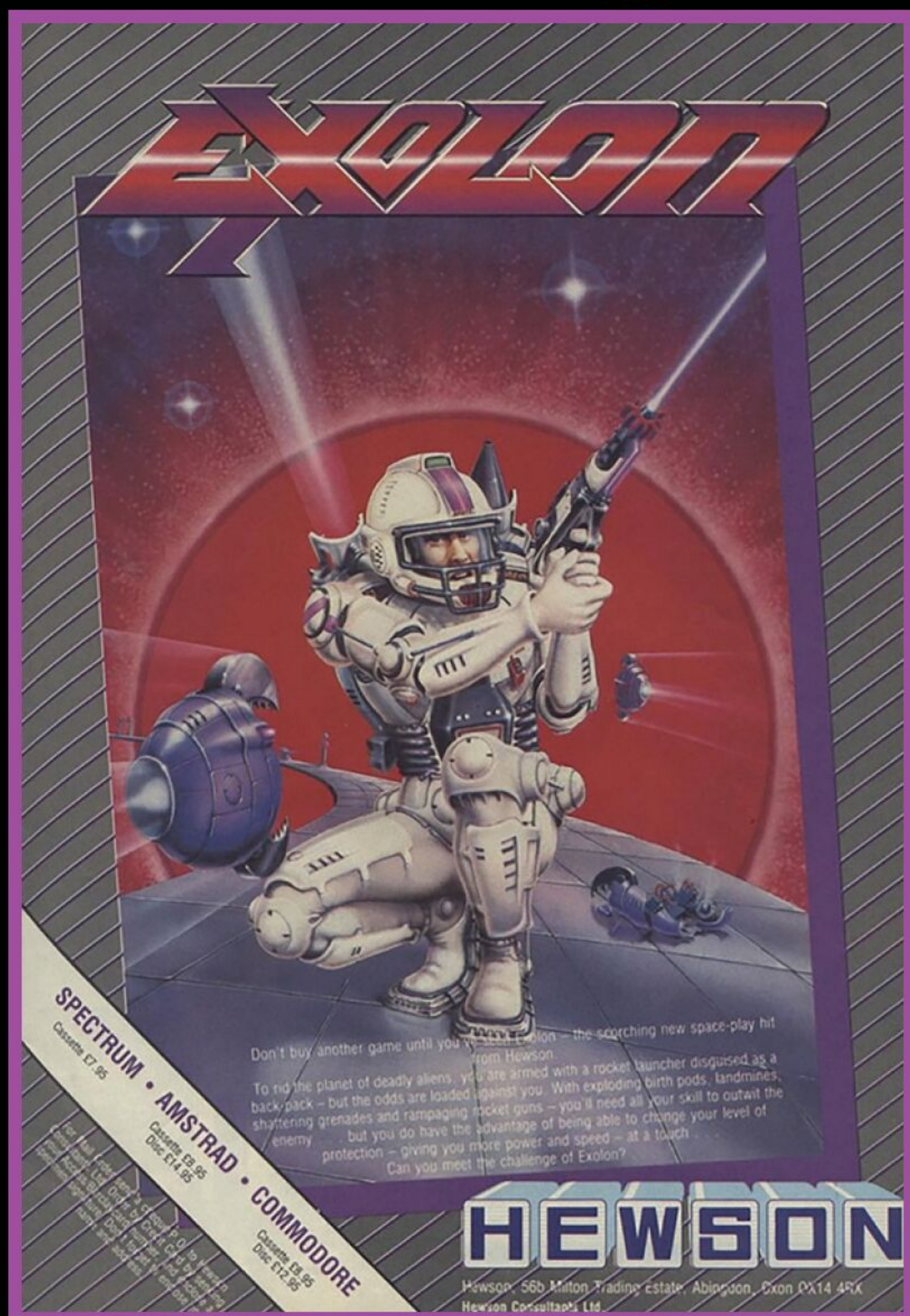


One issue later, *Exolon* landed to an explosive reaction from the Crash review team. "The graphics are superb, with excellent use of colour," said Mike Dunn, "and there's so much to do that it's sure to last for ages." Meanwhile, Robin Candy found the Hewson game perfect for chilling out. "It's always nice to relax with a good shoot-'em-up, and *Exolon* is an excellently-presented game of this type... instantly playable and highly addictive..." Our general rating eloquently summed up the panel's feelings: "A well-presented traditional shoot-'em-up with plenty to do and look at."

An Exolont Compo

We couldn't let Raffaele Cecco's amazing game pass without a compo, could we? Our *Exolon* competition (dubbed 'Exolont Competition' to the groans of readers everywhere) featured a kneeling Mike 'Skippy' Dunn, his hands in the air, a prisoner to Roger and his fellow Crash writers. Your task was to send in a witty caption, and there was a bountiful selection of prizes, including a VIP trip to the Olympia PCW show alongside Hewson's Julia Coombs. Runners-up received Uzi water pistols and copies of the game. The overall winner, M Williams of Kent, noted the similarity of Mike to a certain TV advert character in their triumphant caption: "OK... OK... you've sussed me out... the Milky Bars are on me." Well done to everyone that entered [it was 36 years ago - Ed!] I wonder if Mike's got over it yet?





Marketing

Hewson was a busy software house back in 1987. Adverts for *Ranarama* and *Exolon*'s fellow run 'n' gunner, erm, *Gunrunner*, dominated the months preceding the Raffaele Cecco game. Finally, in issue 44, a month after our review, a full-page advert for *Exolon* appeared, a determined-looking Vitorc fending off attacks while crouched on a metallic platform. "Don't buy another game until you've seen *Exolon* – the scorching new space-play hit from Hewson," declared the blurb. And it was good advice.

The Great Cheat Mode Saga

Never has a cheat mode caused as much confusion as *Exolon*'s. "Go to redefine keys mode and then type in ZOBRA for infinite lives," we proudly declared in issue 45's tips section. Much to the frustration of Crash readers, the cheat didn't work, but it wasn't far wrong: the code was ZORBA, as corrected three issues later. Then, when reader Luke Palmer (aged 12) enquired about cheats for the Hewson classic in issue 89, we got the code wrong again, gleefully telling the youngster to type in ZOBRA on the define keys page. Two issues later, we printed the correct cheat again in a playing tips round-up – Sorry, Luke!

A FEW CHEAT MODES

A being authentically called Thistle from Scotland sent in some really useful cheat modes and codes for brand new games. And F R Stewart finished off the list with some cheats for *Cobra* and *Jack The Nipper*.

EXOLON Go to redefine keys mode and then type ZOBRA for infinite lives.

ROAD RUNNER While in the options screen, and during the scrolling message, press RTHB together for infinite lives, and WVKLO to see the end sequence.

MOUNTIE MICK'S DEATHRIDE Once the game has started, press K once to become invulnerable to bullets.

COBRA Press the Space bar and Z or X, and it slows everything down.

JACK THE NIPPER Go to the police station with the horn and toot it at the safe. Your naughtiness will rise.

Ed] and some handy tips, including this gem regarding Vitorc's handheld blaster: "Quite useful for shooting things." Don't say Crash never helped its loyal readers.

Craig sent in the code on cassette! “Isn’t modern technology wonderful?” noted Lloyd. The next issue brought a map of the first 24 zones courtesy of The Mad Mappers [again, don’t ask –

EXOLON

At last! The long awaited *Exolon* POKEs to take some of the pain out of Hewson's fantastic new game. Craig Wilkinson from Cheshire is responsible for the hack, which came in on a tape – isn't modern technology wonderful?

```
10 REM EXOLON CRASH SEPT 87
20 REM BY WICKED WILLY
30 CLEAR 25499: PRINT AT 11,2:"PLAY
  EXOLON TAPE FROM START": INK 7:
  LOAD"EXOLON"CODE
40 LET A=25500
50 READ B: IF B<>999 THEN POKE A,B: LET
  A=A+1: GOTO 50
60 RANDOMIZE USR 25500
90 REM DON'T DELETE LINES 100 OR 140
100 DATA
  33,0,252,17,80,195,1,19,0,237,176,62,20
  1,50,99,195,205,8,0,195,33,
  184,99,34,111,254,195,19,252
110 DATA
  62,0,50,29,157,33,0,0,34,125,104,34,77,1
  12: REM INFINITE LIVES
120 DATA 62,0,50,110,131: REM INFINITE
  BULLETS
130 DATA 62,0,50,80,146: REM INFINITE
  GRENADES
140 DATA 195,96,109,999
```

culminating in a brace of number one positions (issues 49 and 51). The Hewson game finally slipped out of the chart in issue 58.

A diagram showing two identical qubit components side-by-side. Each component consists of a yellow sphere at the top, a white neck, a blue and white striped section, a green section, and a long purple tail. A red line connects the yellow spheres of the two qubits, representing an entangled state.

An All-Time Great

Issue 57 of Crash included our All-Time Greats supplement. Here were dozens of the games we considered the absolute finest pieces of software to grace the ZX Spectrum. There, on page five, was *Exolon*, keeping fellow greats such as *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*, *Fairlight*, and *Frankie Goes To Hollywood* company. "*Exolon* totally smashed the opposition of the time and provided many months of tipping and mapping. The greatest shuffle 'n' shoot game around," we concluded.

EXOLON

● Hewson Issue 43



Raffaele Cecco's second hit game (remember *Equinox*?) soon rose to star status on the Spectrum. Everyone still asks "How does Raf manage to get so many colours out of the Spectrum and still produce a totally fantastically addictive game?" *Exolon* totally smashed the opposition of the time and provided many months of tipping and mapping. The greatest shuffle 'n' shoot game around. Addictive, attractive, playable ... (and on and on ...)

FAIRLIGHT

● The Edge Issue 22

As well as being attractive, the detailed 3-D objects in *Fairlight* move according to the laws of gravity and inertia for added realism. The rooms in the castle are all shown in isometric perspective and contain some tough puzzles which must be solved to enable progress. Most of these involve shoving blocks and barrels around the screen to create stairways, but small objects can also be picked up for later use. Object manipulation is given an added twist by the fact that each item has a particular weight, and lever the hero isn't exactly Geoff Capes! Plenty of lateral thinking is therefore needed to solve the many problems. *Fairlight* is much more than just another 3-D arcade adventure and has the depth of gameplay and realistic object behaviour to make you feel as if you're really there. The follow-up is exactly the same! (Well, almost.)

FAT WORM BLOWS A SPARKY

● Durell Issue 34

The odd setting for this fantastic game is actually inside the Spectrum itself. And fancy that, the circuits of this Speccy are crawling with creepier bugs and Sputniks which hassle the overweight hero, Fatty the Worm. All he wants to do is reproduce himself (aw, he wants to hear the patter of little segments) by collecting 50 spindles which lie scattered around the PCB. Fatty slithers up ramps and along databuses while avoiding or destroying the creepy crawlies with

his blaster sparkies. The action is portrayed in an innovative bird's eye view. As objects move outwards from the centre of the screen, more of their sides come into view, giving a truly stunning effect which is enough to give you vertigo as Fatty creeps across circuits high above the main PCB. But *Fat Worm* is not just pretty graphically, as it contains some really fascinating gameplay – magnificent.

FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

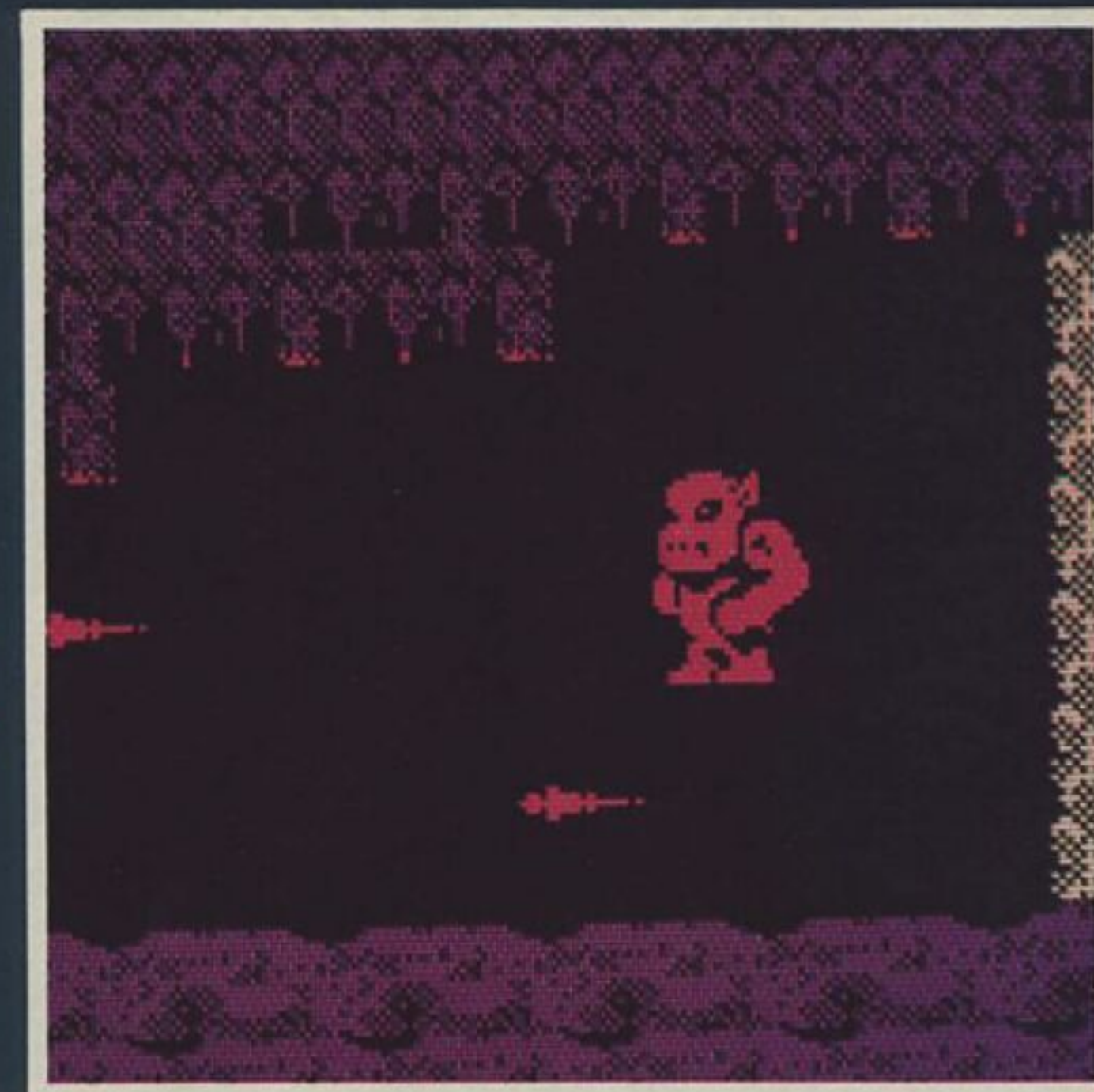
● Ocean Issue 19

The theme for *Frankie Goes To Hollywood* is derived from the strange scenario created by the Liverpool band's first album. Some of their songs are even directly represented as subgames in this icon-driven graphic adventure. A surreal atmosphere is created in this game where the player has to solve the murder which has

been committed by someone in the drab terrace. The game's prevalent adventure element is enhanced by the beautifully imaginative and diverse graphics. And what better to listen to while you're playing than the music on the B-side of the tape – a dream to play.

GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

● Elite Issue 30



The ever-popular Capcom coin-op made its way to the Spectrum in tremendous style, courtesy of Elite. The brave knight sets out on a quest to rescue his beloved damsel (no doubt in distress!) who has been kidnapped by an evil monster. The knight has a choice of weapons, each of which is effective in a different way. Gameplay in the horizontally scrolling playing area is absolutely frenetic,

while the little knight is superbly animated as he leaps and crouches. Colour is also used well and avoids most attribute clash while providing an attractive appearance. One of the best coin-op conversions achieved and now available on Elite's 6 Pak Volume 3 (£9.99 case, £14.99 disk) along with *Paperboy*, *Enduro Racer* plus a few others.

CRASH All Time Greats V

A Compilation Regular



While *Exolon* never made it to a budget label, the run 'n' gunner became a perennial on various compilations. Christmas 1987 brought Hewson's *Four Smash Hits*, with *Zynaps*, *Ranarama* and *Uridium* accompanying *Exolon*, and *Beau-Jolly's Computer Classics*, which included four more games besides the Hewson one. An appearance on Gremlin's *Space Ace* compilation followed a year later before Hewson's mega *Christmas Collection* in 1989 and, finally, the *Cecco Collection* in 1990. This latter compilation included four of Raffaele Cecco's biggest hits for the Speccy: *Exolon*, *Stormlord*, *Cybernoid* and *Cybernoid II: The Revenge*.

Final Thoughts

Uncomplicated blasting action has always had its place in Spectrum gaming, and *Exolon* has been thrilling fans since it first appeared on the shelves. Despite its lack of innovation, the level of presentation and sheer vibrant colour of the Raffaele Cecco game makes it a true icon of the Speccy. If you haven't played *Exolon* yet – well, you really should!

RetCon

GHOSTLY CAPERS



Lee 'Chops' Stevenson

£ DONATION • 📅 SEP 2023 • 🖨 48K / 128K

DOWNLOAD: <https://on.mom/PJRx>Physical edition available from Teknamic (<https://on.mom/HTmN>) for €12.90

RetCons are generally not that scary (unless it's a Commodore one, obviously - yikes!) but wouldn't it be fun if they were? I loved being chased by ghosts and the like, and I also like looking at old retro geeky stuff too - wouldn't that just be a match made in heaven? Maybe not for this one.

Super Hero Steve is the main man here being the host of this particular retro event, alas, just as he was looking to get everything set up for the main event; he learns that the venue is haunted by ghosts. These ghosts have taken a disliking to Steve and his retro goodies so have taken it upon themselves to steal his equipment and hide it in various places around the building. Steve must take off around the building looking for his gear before he is scared witless and more importantly, get the

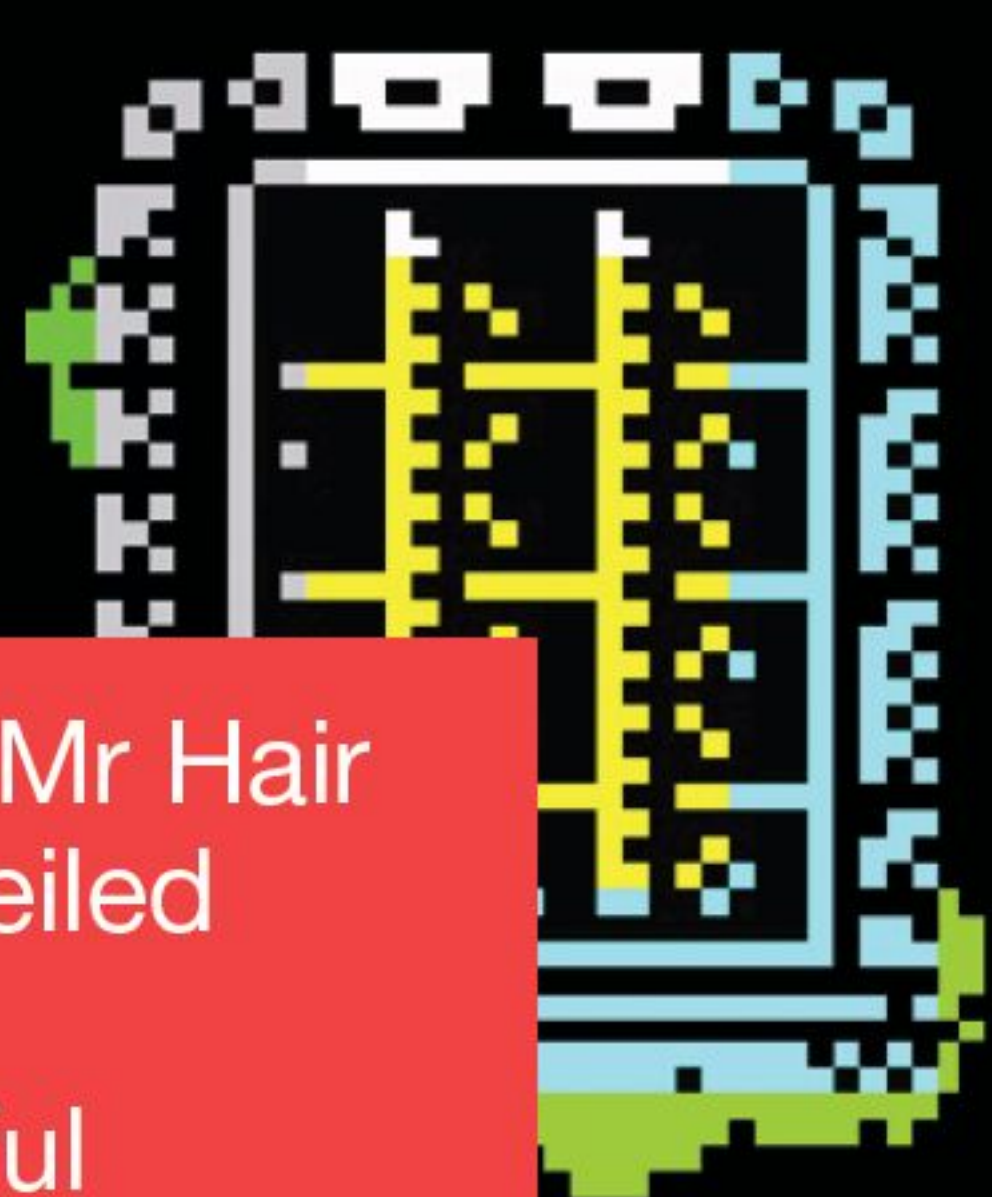
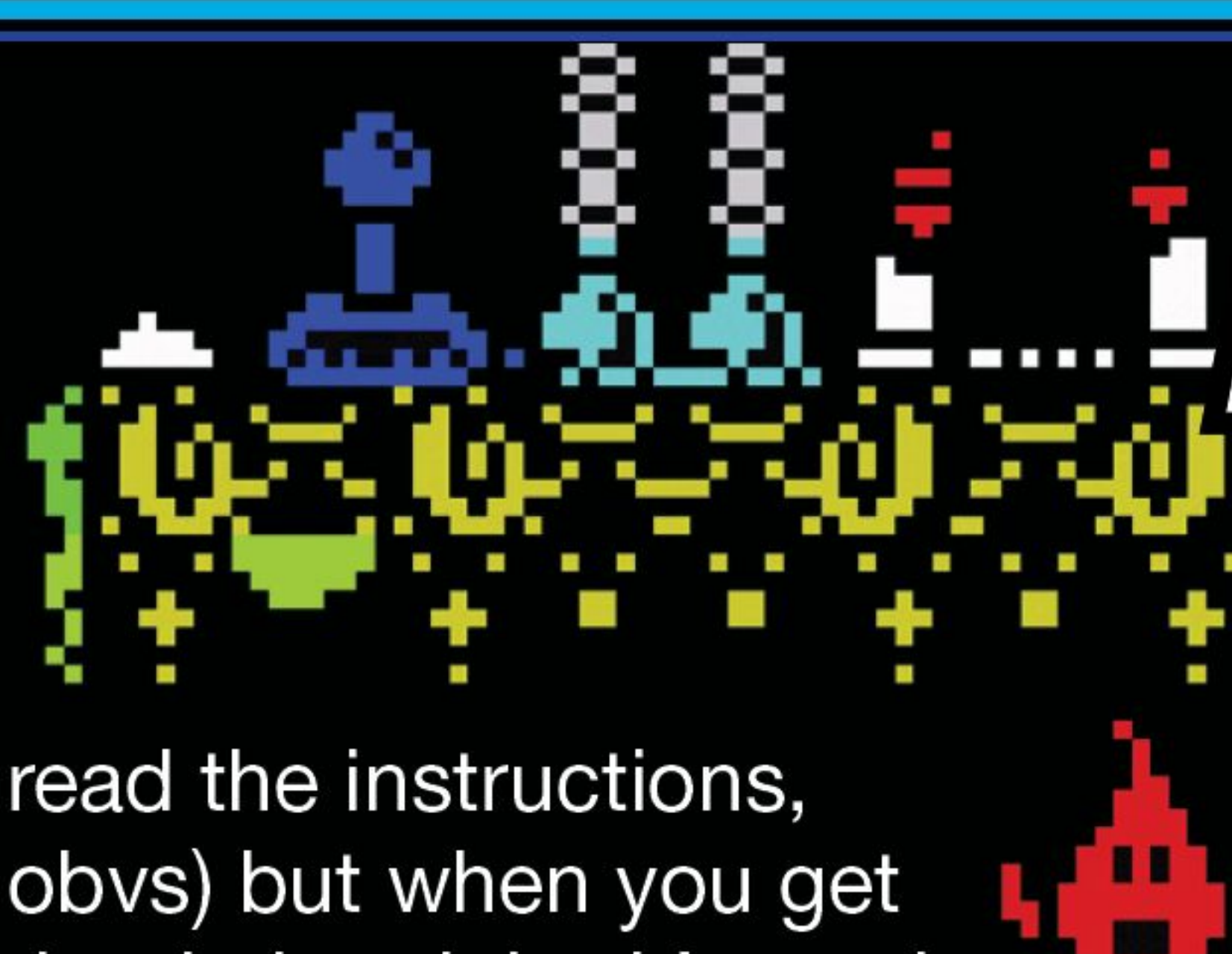


equipment back before the event starts. Which of these is more important, you can decide for yourself.

Criticism

Another platformer enters the fray as you navigate your way through the many rooms to be discovered, with plenty of enemies to avoid, platforms to land

on, platforms to avoid, and platforms that disappear when you least expect them. Little buggers. What is a little different here is that other than the usual trick of avoiding or shooting nasties to stay alive, you can 'hide' just before you come into contact with them, meaning that they will pass you by without so much of a whimper. Stupid me didn't realise this at first (didn't



Gordon's Take

Taking a breather from the Mr Hair series, Lee Chops has unveiled what I believe to be his finest title so far. Echoing vibes reminiscent of *Olli & Lissa* and other colourful Codemaster's latter-era classics, *Ghostly Capers* is an absolute delight to experience. The rooms offer great variety, and collecting retro gear adds an extra layer of fun. Notably, the game's visuals and gameplay are top-notch, and the music - arguably one of the best Spectrum tunes in recent times - adds a fantastic touch. It can be rather tough to play - mainly because of impatience of familiarising myself with the ghosts' paths before attempting to collect the retro goodies; a misplaced duck or jump will always result in failure. That's the allure of a solid platformer, though - it draws you in and challenges you to take risks.



read the instructions, obvs) but when you get the timing right, it's - quite literally - a lifesaver.

The game also allows you to choose your journey as there's not one set path to follow, with the beginning of the game allowing you to enter various areas of the building via a vast staircase. The enemies are mischievous, as well as the disappearing platforms previously mentioned with the latter also including some perilous spikes along the bottom. And before you ask, yes I did keep hitting my head on these and died all the time. Thanks for reminding me.

- Paul Davies

When released, any donations received will be sent to the Southend Cystic Fibrosis Association:
<http://on.mom/kRWM>
 Any donations are appreciated, thank you.



Comments

The game features Lee 'Chops' usual cartoon graphics, which are pleasing to the eye. An excellent tune plays throughout the game to keep you entertained. Overall this is a fun platform adventure with a nice added 'hide' move which you don't see a lot in these types of games, though is a welcome addition, making this a well-rounded game to get stuck into.

Keyboard: Q,A,O,P & M
 Joystick: Sinclair, Kempston

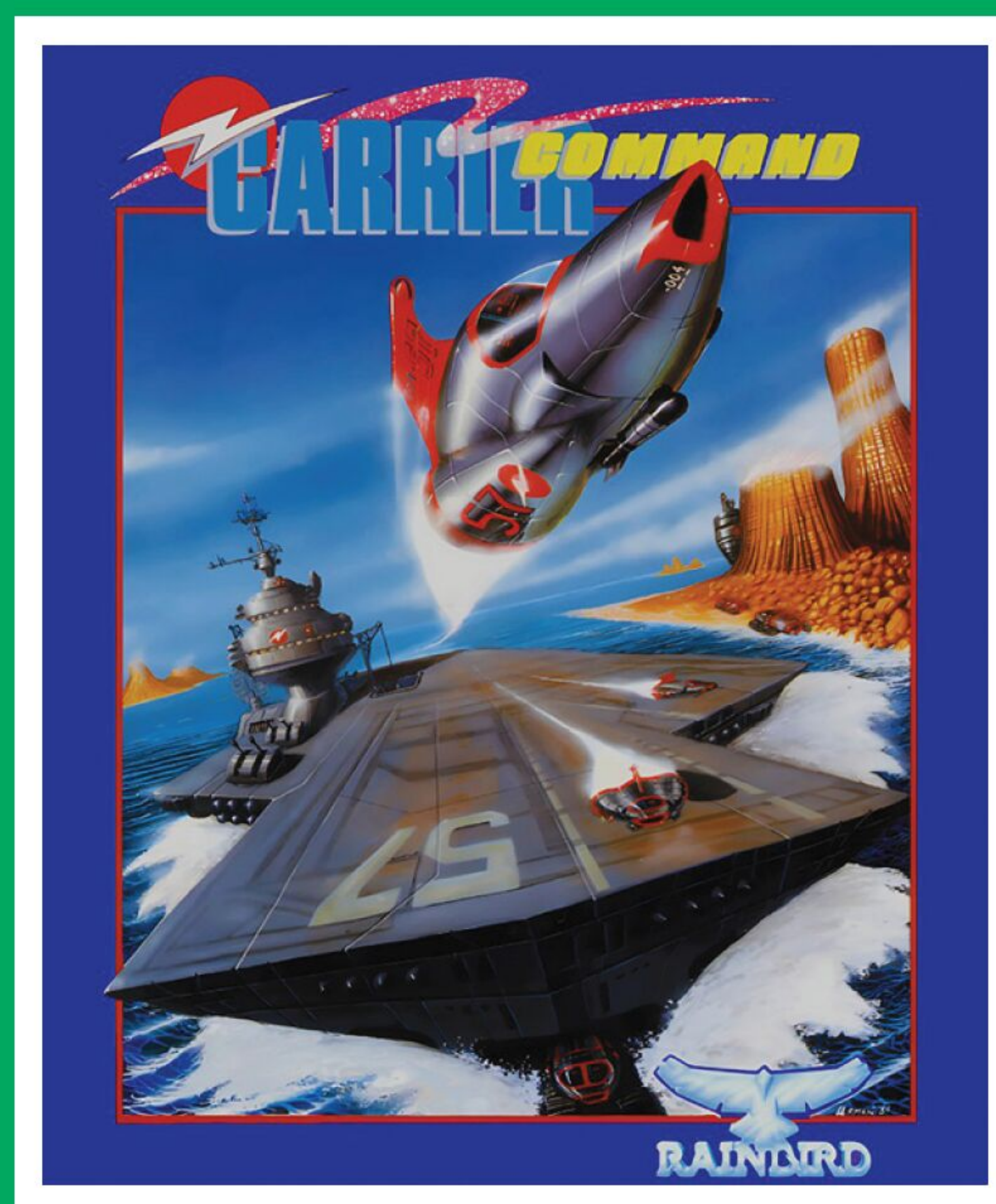


Use of Computer:	81%
Graphics:	82%
Playability:	83%
Getting started:	81%
Addictive Qualities:	83%
Overall:	82%

Game of Clones: The Software Piracy Saga

In days of yore, piracy ran rampant through the digital landscape, infiltrating the ZX Spectrum scene like a flotilla of devious software privateers. Unlike the cartridge-based Atari 2600, the ZX Spectrum games relied on cassette tapes for distribution, making them susceptible to unauthorised duplication. Surprisingly, the dirty deed wasn't undertaken by sinister cartels and other organized crime organisations. No, it was carried out by groups of enthusiastic schoolchildren who were excited about playing the latest game. Many Specchums befriended the 'weirdo' audiophiles, as they were the first to adopt the technical revolution of the double cassette deck. They may have smelled and had weird ticks, but they gladly duplicated a tape on high speed during the school lunch hour for the princely sum of 50p - a veritable bargain. If you were to believe the doomsayers of the time, this would have crippled the gaming industry. Hindsight tells us otherwise, but it most certainly denied revenue to the software houses and authors. Throughout the Spectrum's lifespan, publishers had to create counter-measures to thwart the theft of their intellectual property. They devised various anti-piracy measures serving as virtual barricades against the thieving hordes. These measures were designed to deter and hinder pirates, making their ill-gotten copies less reliable or simply impossible to replicate accurately. CRASH looks back at these methods used, and decides which ones worked, was silly or downright frustrating.

The Book of Words



This was a fairly common method that lasted beyond the Spectrum's lifespan, and upon loading, it necessitated the input of a specific word from the manual that accompanied the game. For instance, the game would indicate 'page 3, word 5'. The player would subsequently need to navigate through the book to that precise location and word, and then type it into the prompt. Players will recall encountering this in Rainbird's *Carrier Command*. The manual that accompanied it was quite substantial in size.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 7/10

It certainly affected the ease of use after piracy, and photocopying a large book was impracticable. The easiest way to circumvent this was to phone up your mate who owned the original and quote him the 'location' of the word so he could recite it to you.

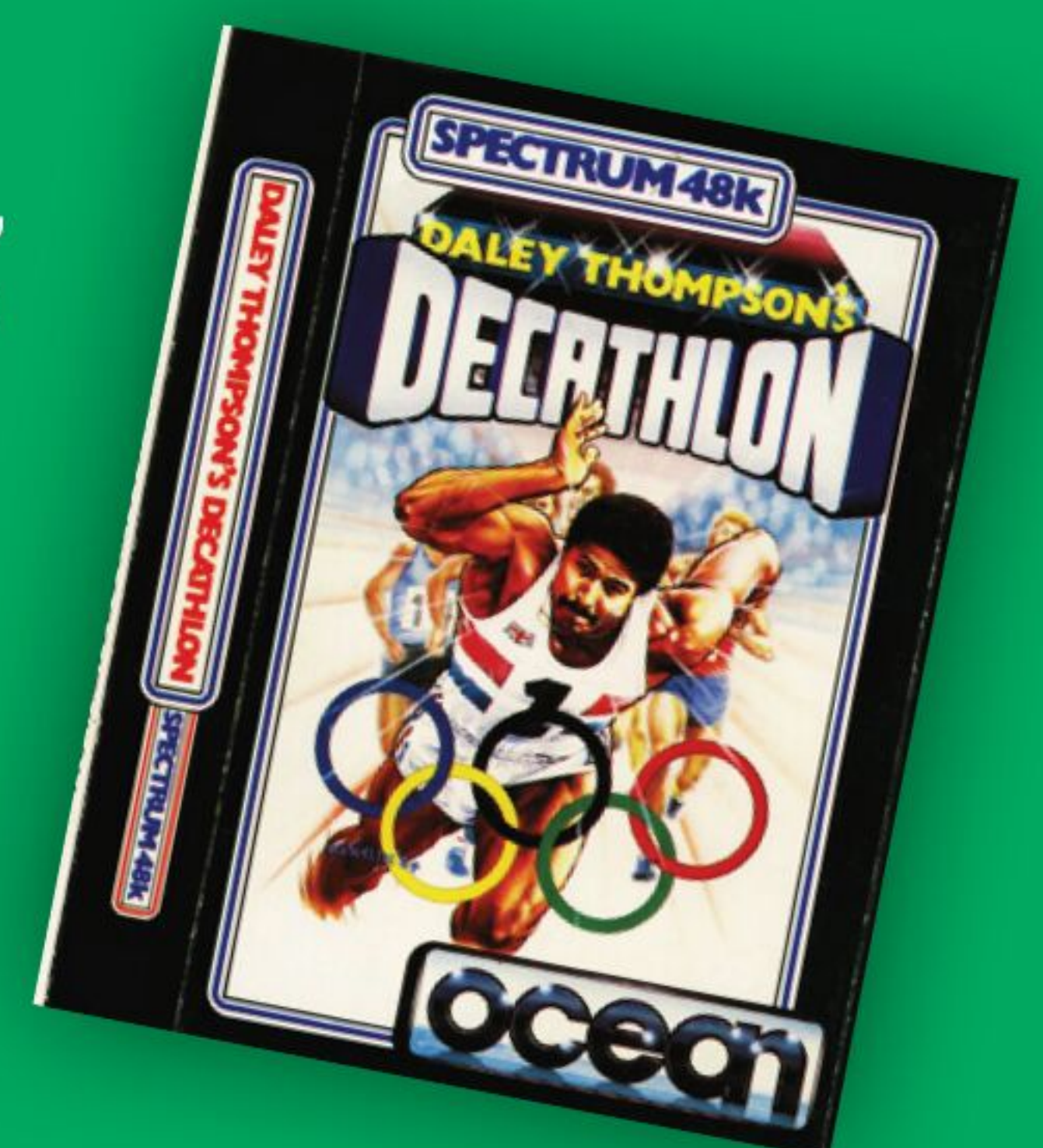
Speedlock



Created by David Aubrey Jones, the first game to utilise this new method of game loading was Ocean's *Daley Thompson's Decathlon*. Primarily, the technique allowed for faster loading times but was lauded as a tool against piracy, with the higher-pitched loading sounds supposedly meant to be difficult to duplicate on home-owned cassette decks. Many other companies followed suit and created their own similar speedloaders.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 0/10

Copies of all of these games persisted. Yes, they were temperamental in loading, but so were the originals they were cloned from.



Lenslok

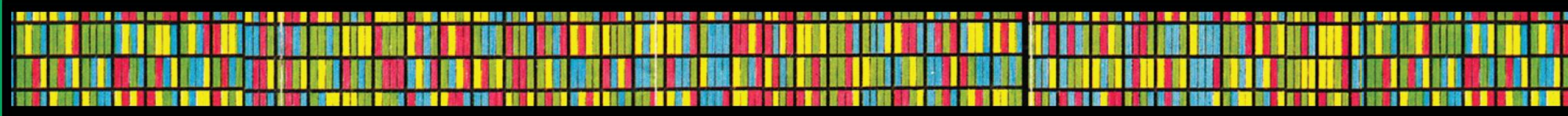
The mere suggestion of this anti-piracy method sends shudders of fear down the spine of many gamers who experienced this plastic bastard back in the day. Not many games

supported it, but it was an innocuous prism framed in a plastic holder. The plastic frame folded to create a distance spacer between the prism and the TV screen. When calibrated correctly, on holding it over the scrambled code that preceded the game, the (anxious) player prayed to all the gods that they could decipher the gobbledygook and enter the correct text to enable the game. Firebird/Rainbird and Digital Integration were the primary users of this technology. Everyone reading this will say *Elite*!

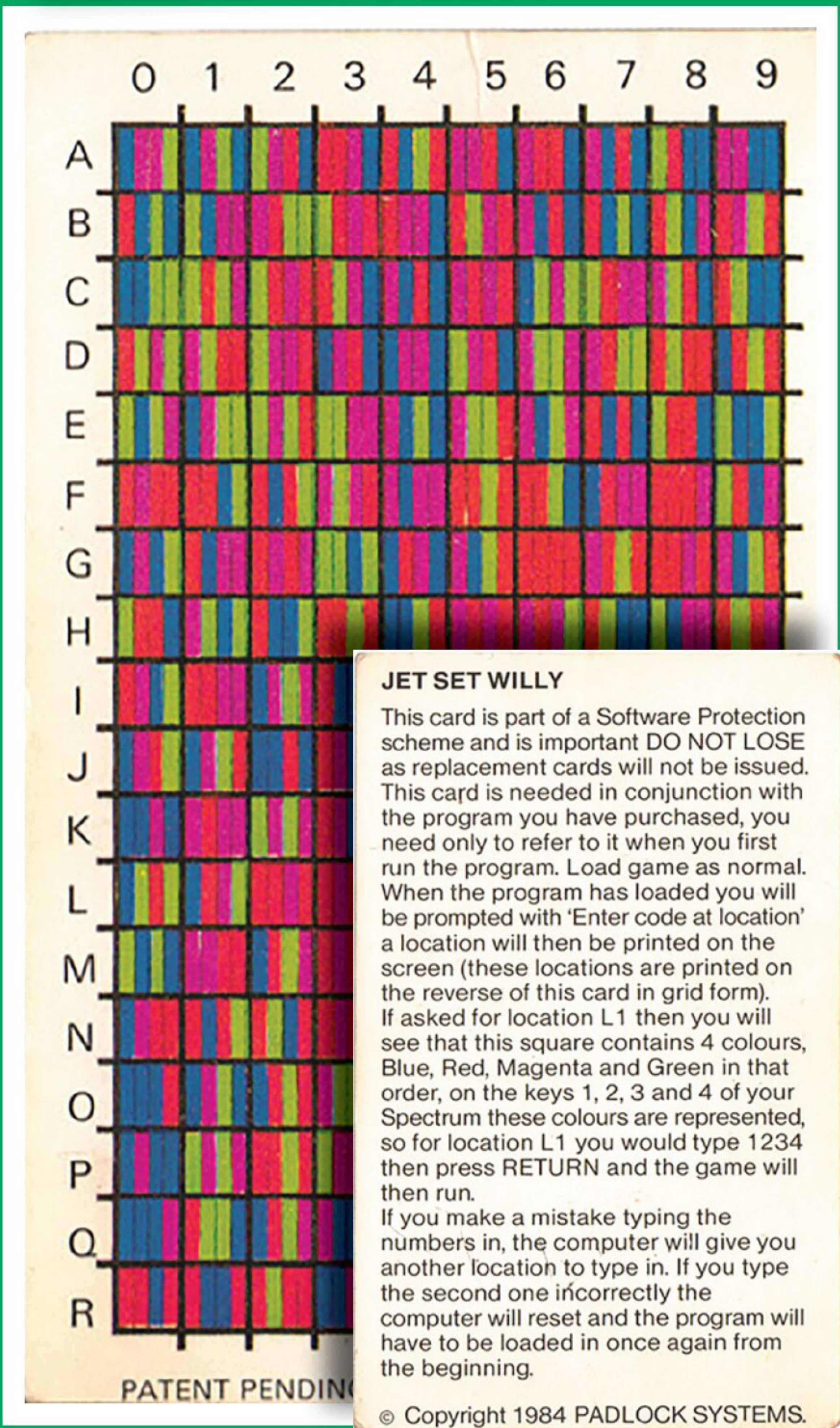
SUCCESS FACTOR - 1/10

Nine times out of ten, this bloody pile of plastic crap denied genuine owners of these games access to the worlds these games promised. The accuracy of the Lenslok device depended on the size of the TV owned by the consumer, as it was manufactured to what was considered the average TV size. In the end, it was easy to hack, and basic code was available to type in to circumvent the requirement of this annoying device.





Jet Set Willy - The Colour Card

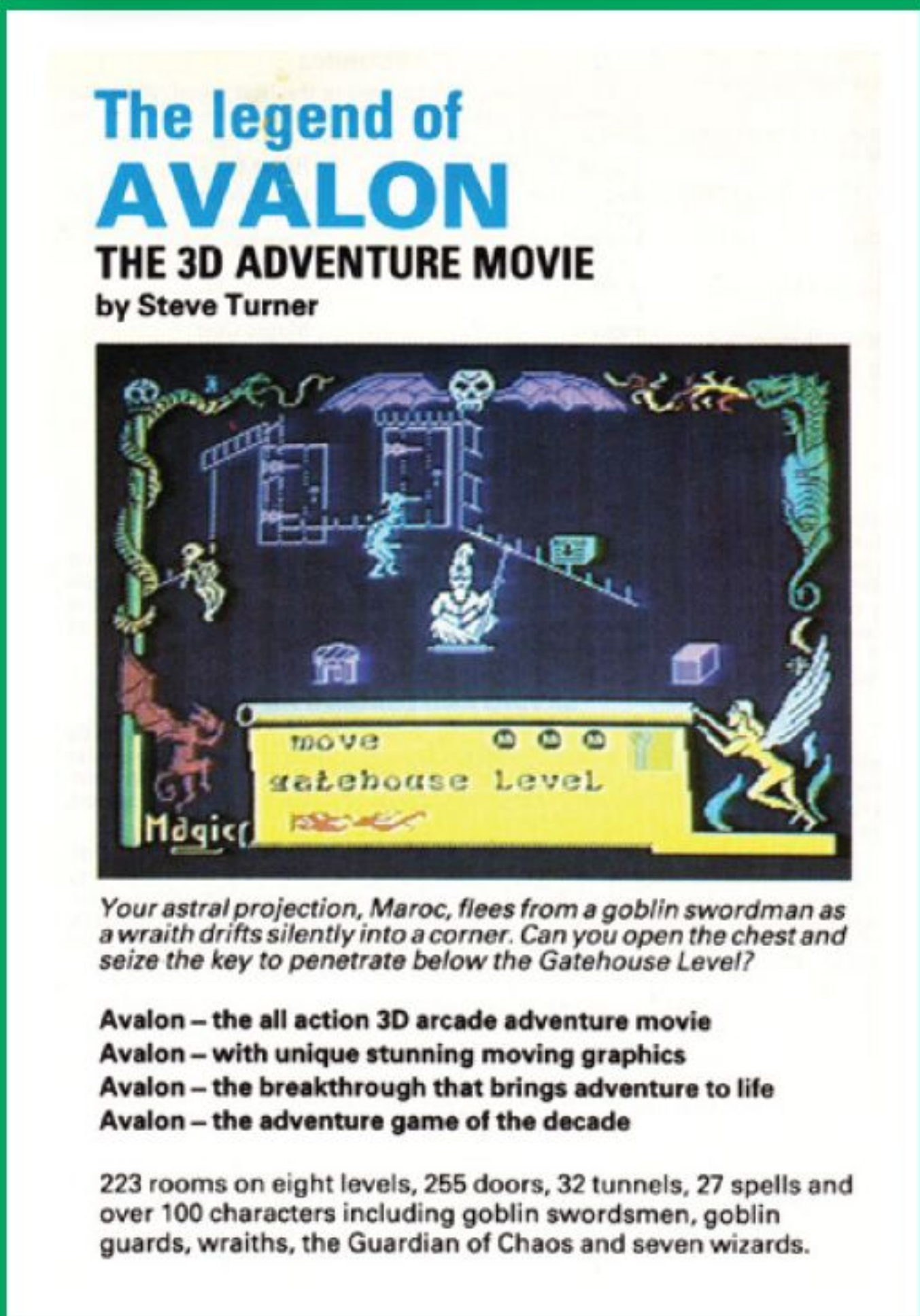


A method employed in the classic game *Jet Set Willy*, created by Matthew Smith and released by Software Projects in 1984, was the utilisation of the 'Colour Card'. Before embarking on their platforming adventure, players were required to reference a physical card that came with the cassette. This card displayed a specific sequence of colours that players were required to input correctly in the game to progress. This innovative approach made it challenging for pirates to replicate the sequence accurately without access to the original card. Please bear in mind that this was a time when colour photocopyers were not commonly available.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 3/10

In truth, the card wasn't that large, so everyone at school pilfered graph paper from the Maths dept and hand-copied it across. It was more fun than a punishment exercise. *Jet Set Willy 2* acknowledged this ease of copying and released the sequel with a far larger grid that unfolded within the cassette inlay. In truth, it didn't prevent the most determined of pirates. I had a mate who paid his sister to replicate this - she thought it was great fun.

Other cards

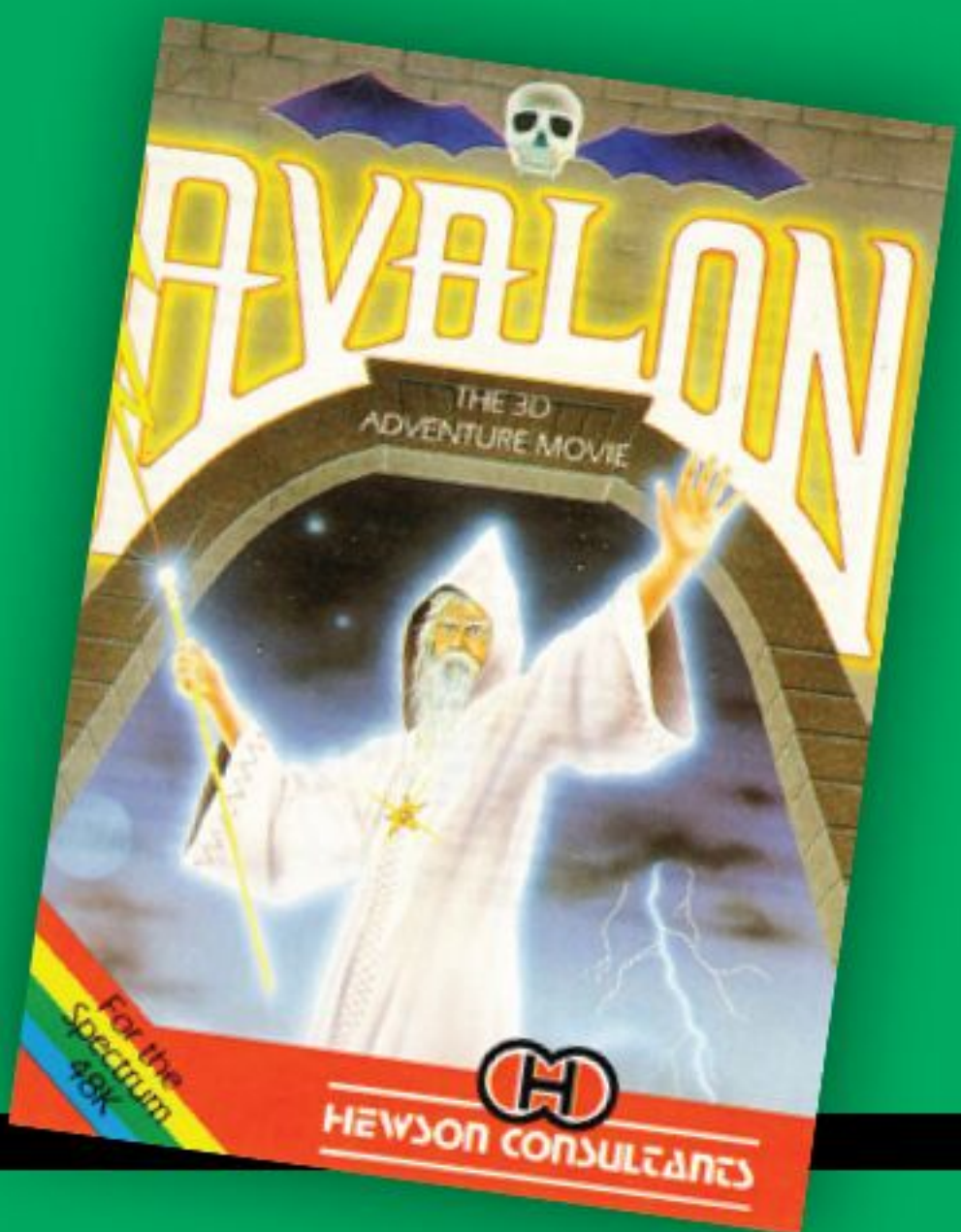


Just like *Jet Set Willy*, other games had similar methods that required you to own the original with a code card - it worked in the same fashion.

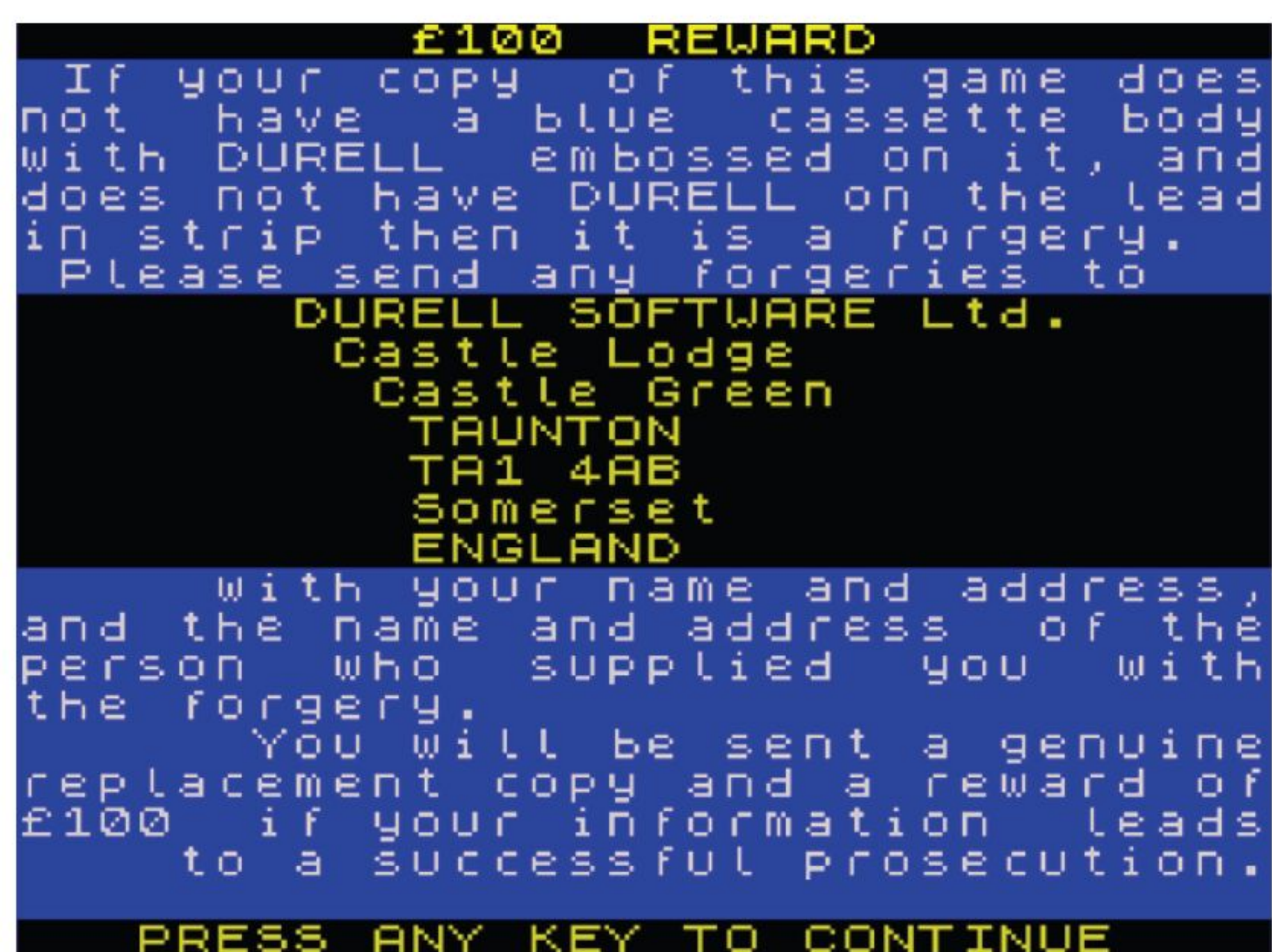
Avalon, released in 1984 by Hewson is a prominent example of this. Contained inside the case was an off-white sheet with a grid of 4-digit codes in cyan blue. This was regarded as difficult to photocopy, impeding aspiring pirates.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 3/10

Like *Jet Set Willy*, it didn't take long to handwrite these codes. It also photocopied okay if the contrast was turned up (that is not a confession).



The Incentive



£100 REWARD
If your copy of this game does not have a blue cassette body with DURELL embossed on it, and does not have DURELL on the lead in strip then it is a forgery. Please send any forgeries to
DURELL SOFTWARE Ltd.
Castle Lodge
Castle Green
TAUNTON
TA1 4AB
Somerset
ENGLAND
with your name and address, and the name and address of the person who supplied you with the forgery. You will be sent a genuine replacement copy and a reward of £100 if your information leads to a successful prosecution.
PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE

Companies like Durell offered a cash reward for anyone with information about people providing pirate copies. The blue screen with writing offering £100 for information that led to a successful prosecution was loaded up before all of their games went to their title page.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 2/10

It didn't deter any playground pirates did it? It may have made some of us schoolkids stop and think for a second - they didn't want to be arrested by the fuzz, but that notion was short-lived.

Bespoke Hardware



Mikro-Gen went very ambitious in 1985 with the release of *Shadow of the Unicorn*. To be able to play the game, you required the interface that was supplied with it - this boosted the Spectrum with an impressive extra 16K of memory. Anyone could copy the cassette, but it was useless without the hardware.

SUCCESS FACTOR - 10/10

Yes, it did work - but it was a costly addition (it retailed for £14.95 at the time). In the end, the game got middling reviews, which crippled the sales and no one really played it.

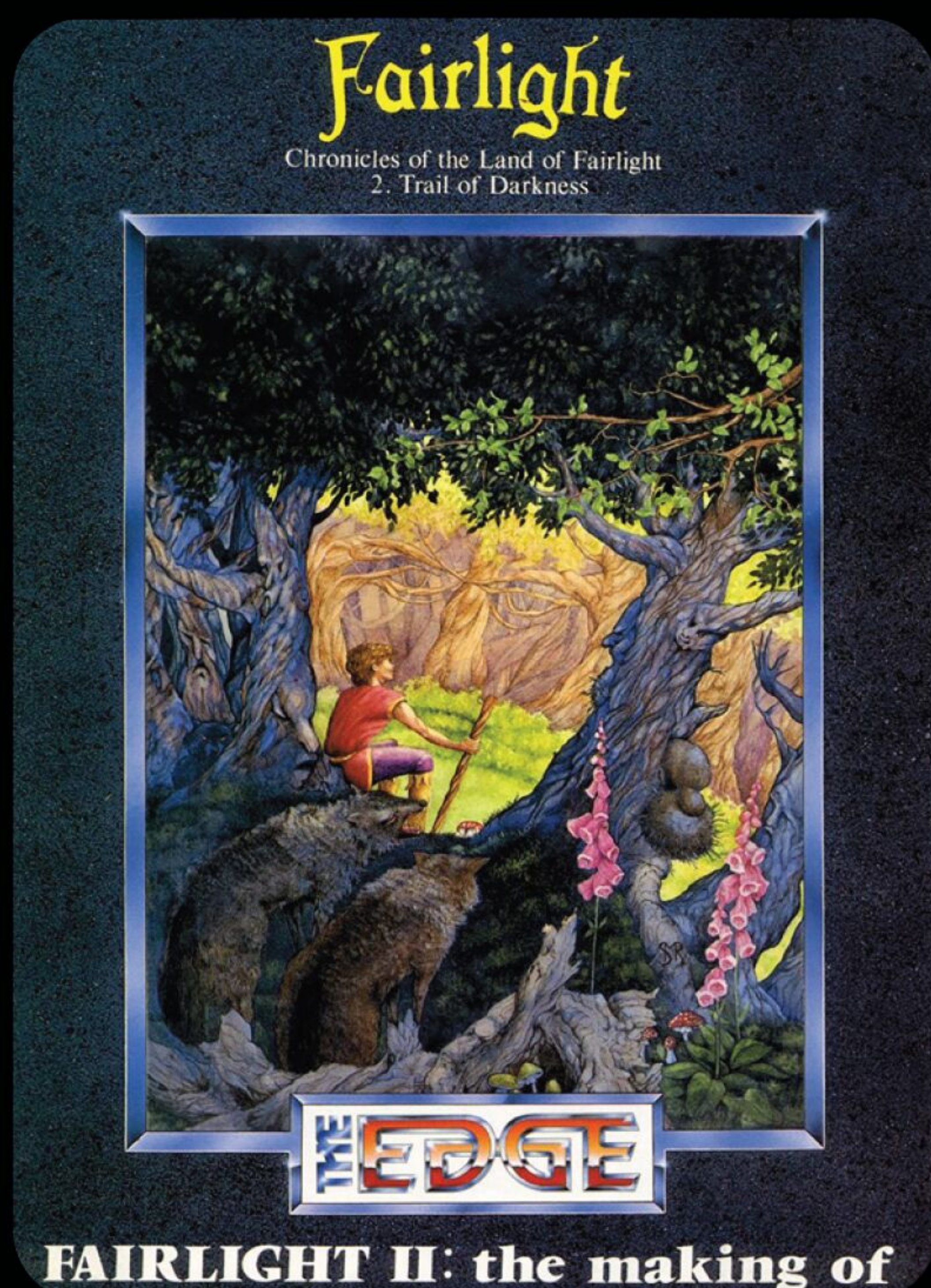
In conclusion...

Piracy posed a genuine threat to the future of video games, and this threat became even more damaging during the 16-bit era, as it was a habit that had bled into this period from the cultural practices of the preceding generation. Many of these measures ultimately failed in their goal, but if they hindered even a handful of bootleggers, it was a worthy exercise. Regrettably, for the developers, their efforts were rendered futile with the introduction of Romantic Robot's Multiface. This sneaky device could generate savestates following the anti-piracy prompt, but that is a story for another day.

CRASH Investigates

When there's something that doesn't quite make sense in the world of the ZX Spectrum, Martyn Carroll goes looking for answers. In this issue he finds out what went wrong with Fairlight II.

Fairlight was a classic 3D adventure game. The CRASH guys loved it, awarding it 95% and a Smash in



The game's artwork features a number of hidden faces. How many can you spot?



the November 1985 issue. "A stunning game, achieved with a new programming technique," concluded the review, referring to the

Creator of the Fairlight games, Mr Bo Jangeborg.

'3D Worldmaker' system programmer Bo Jangeborg created to bring his game to life. *Fairlight* was subtitled 'A Prelude', suggesting that further adventures would follow, and indeed *Fairlight II: Trail of Darkness* arrived 12 months later. CRASH was cooler on the sequel, giving it 81%. Although nothing specific was mentioned in the review, beyond it being "too much like the first game", the reviewers perhaps sensed something was a little off.

Fast forward to the early 2000s and *Fairlight II* was being chewed over on various Spectrum forums and newsgroups. It seemed that the game was bugged to the point where it was impossible to complete without cheating. Would the game's publisher The Edge really release the game in an unfinished state?

THE INVESTIGATION

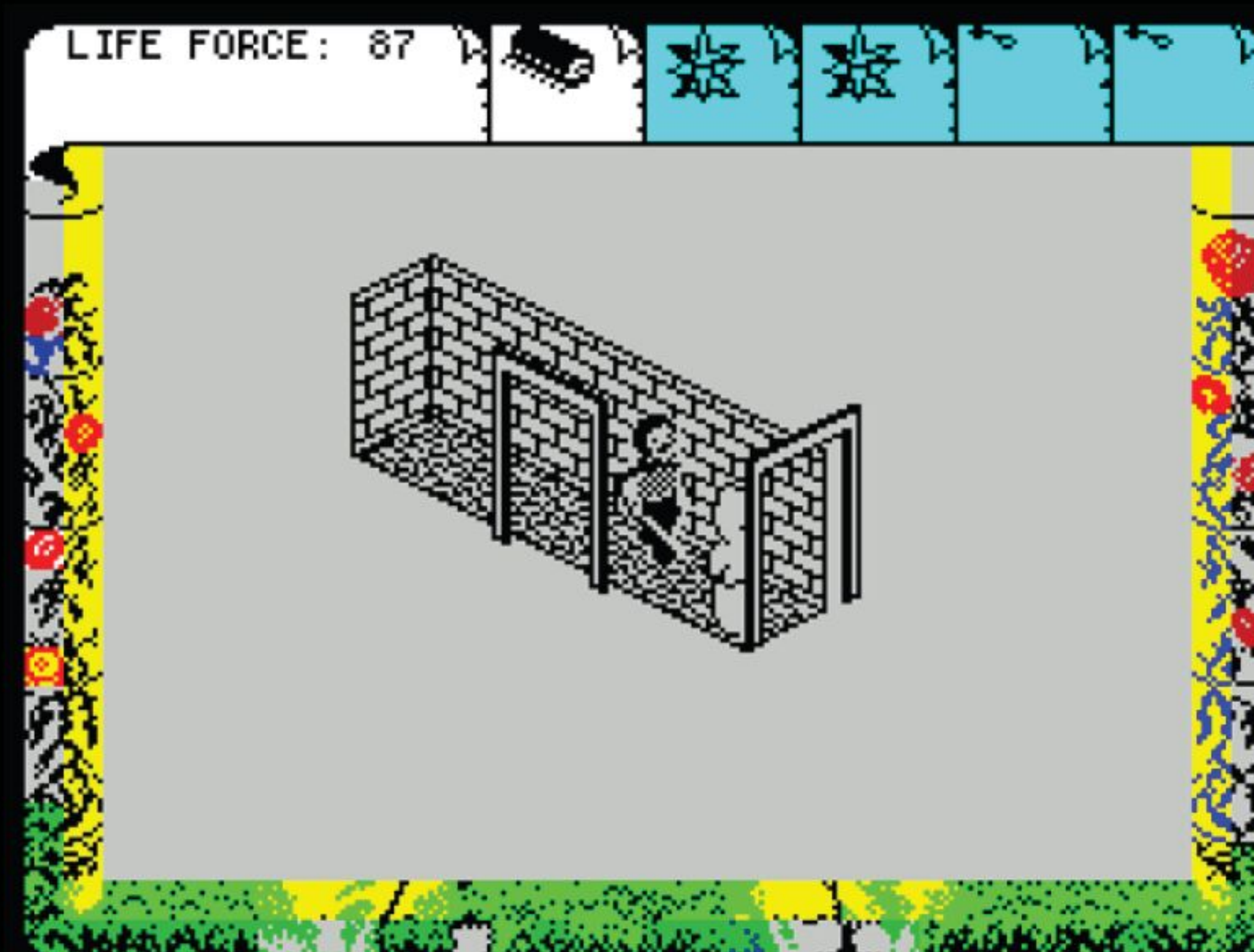
Much of the bug finding was done by Matthew Wilson, creator of the Crash Online Edition website that kept memories of our favourite mag alive during the fallow years. Matthew discovered that the problems begin at the end of the second part (the game was split into two halves), when you ascend the tower to recover the fabled Book of Light from the Dark Lord. Standing between you and victory are five locked



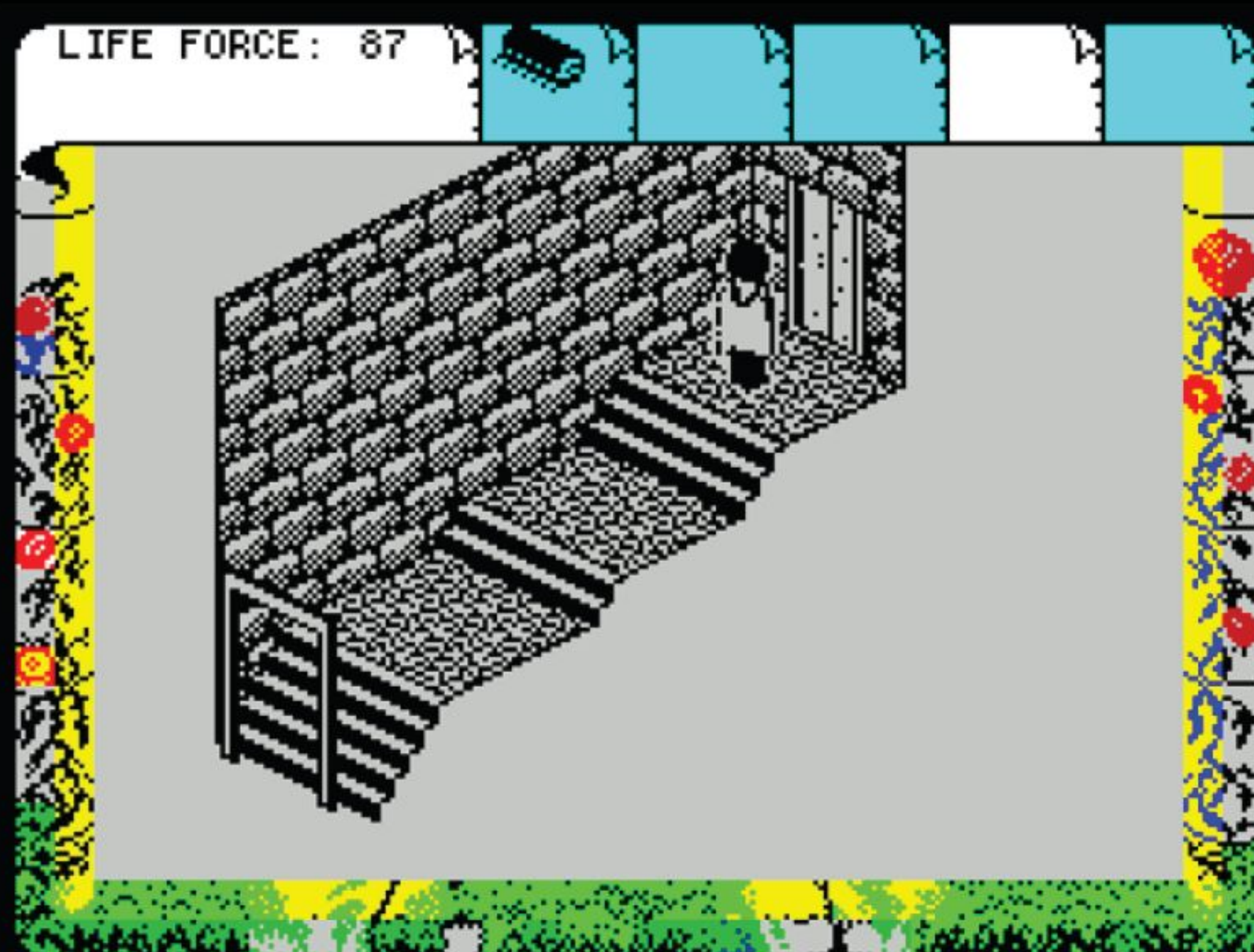
The game begins with Isvar standing outside of the castle where the original Fairlight took place.

doors. The first four can be unlocked using keys you find on your travels, with the only issue being the monk that is standing guard outside the third door. To defeat other monks in the game you need to fling a spiky ball at them, but this particular chappie is seemingly invincible. Matthew discovered that it was possible to defeat him by using the magic carpet to fly up to the doorframe above the monk's head and drop a spiky ball on his noodle. This clever workaround involves pixel perfect movement and a chunk of luck, and is almost certainly not the way you were supposed to solve it. But it worked.

Anyway, we then move to the fifth and final door where we discover a more troublesome bug. There's simply no way of unlocking this door. None of the keys or other objects in

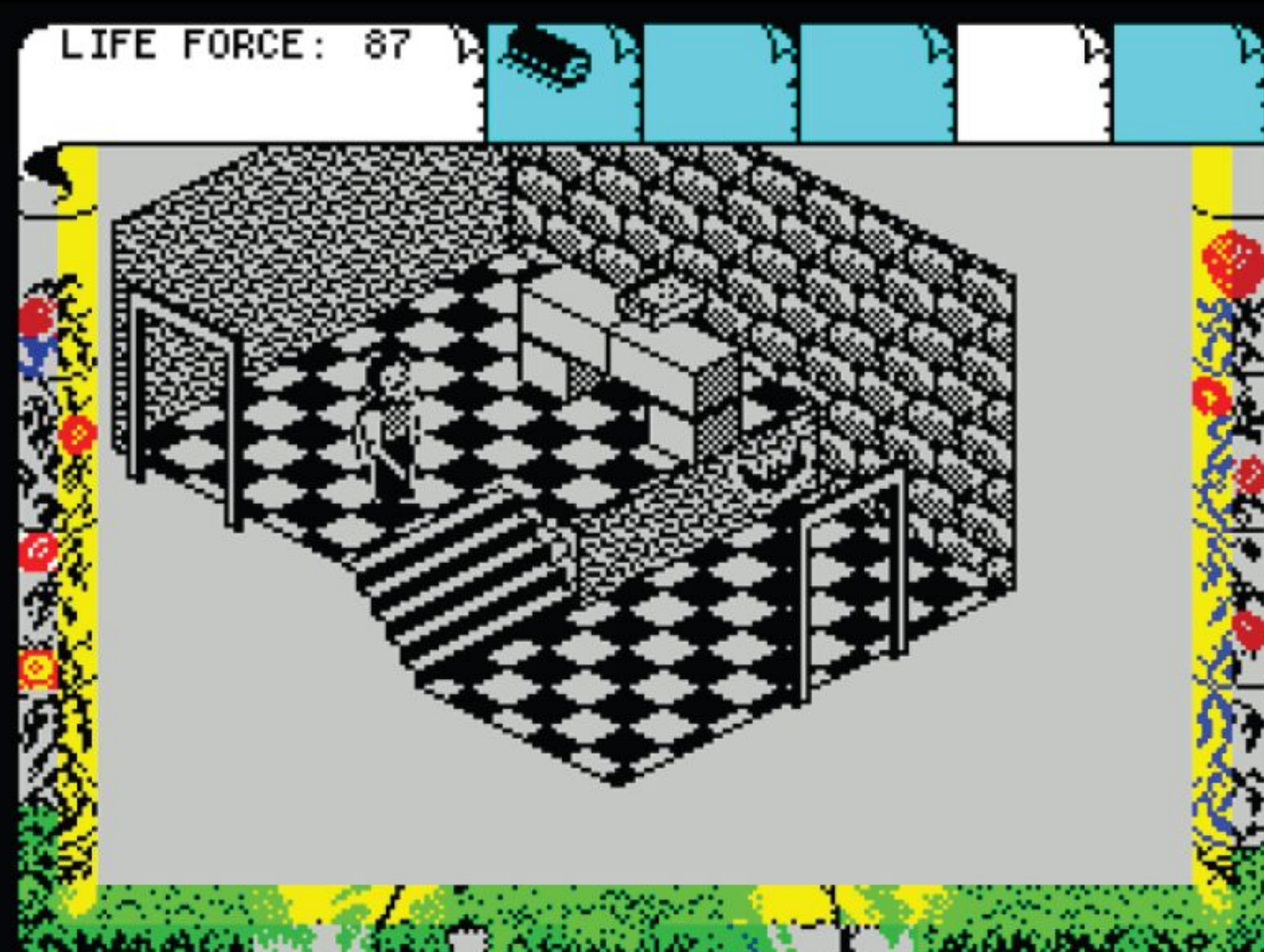


None shall pass! This moody monk blocks your way.

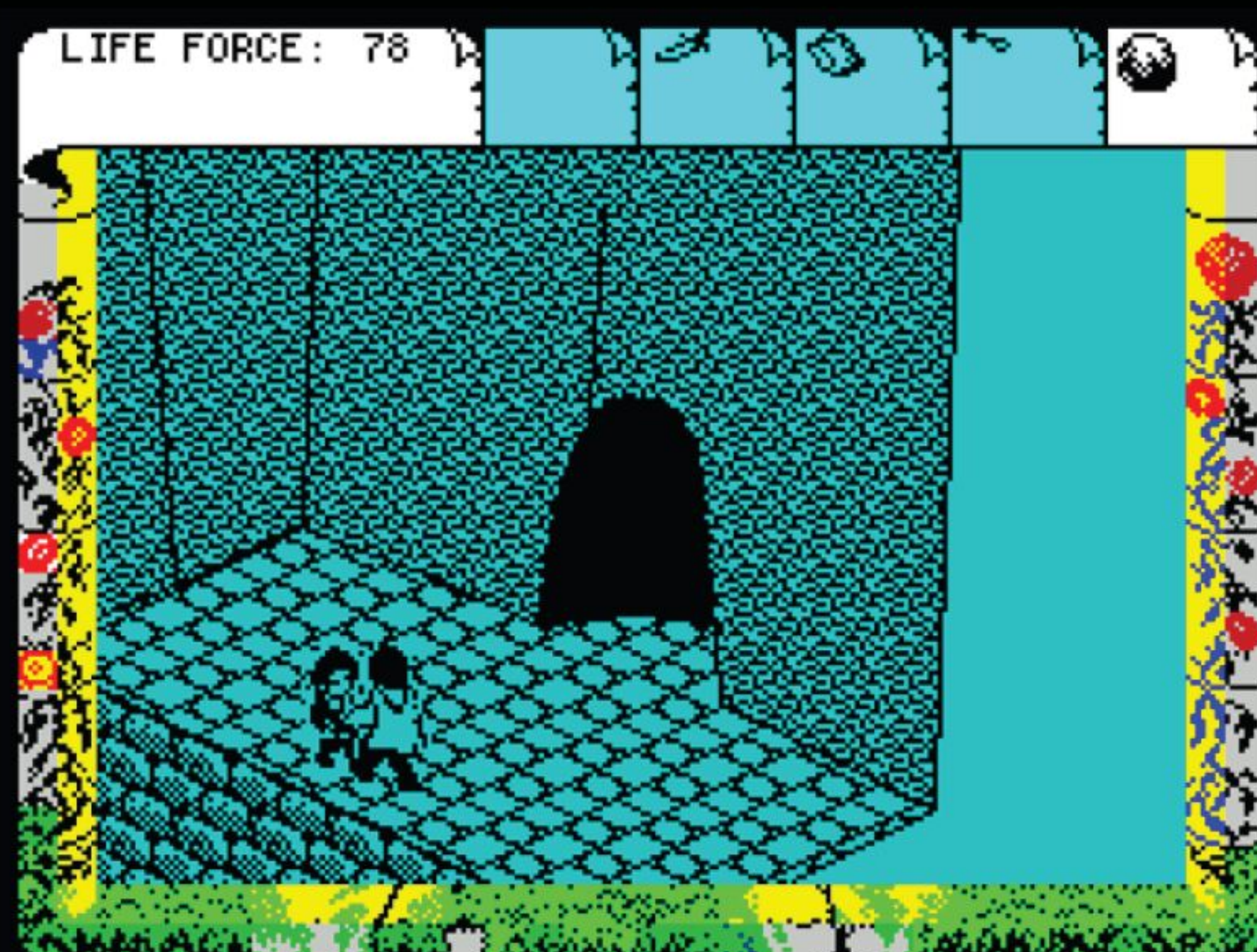


Here's the dreaded door of stubbornness. Only a poke will force it open.

the game work on it. A map in a French magazine suggests you need to use the magic wand from earlier in the game (the one that stops you taking damage from the bubble thing), but no, it does nothing. The door just ain't opening. The only way to get inside the final room and see the end sequence is to enter a poke which unlocks every door in the game.



In the final room, where the Book of Light lies, the Dark Lord transforms into a bat and flies away. The boulder.



Nothing to see here. Just roughing up a local.

So how did this happen? I interviewed Bo back in 2013, and returning to those recordings, this is what he told me. “*Fairlight II* is where my problems with The Edge really started. I hadn’t been all that pleased with how the relationship had been developing, so I was looking into maybe going to some other companies.” This displeased The Edge and Bo admits that he didn’t exactly help the situation by leaving London (where he coded *Fairlight*) and writing most of the sequel in his native Sweden. “My work rate slowed down



The end? The final screen sets up the sequel that never arrived.



One of the new additions is the magic carpet which lets you hover across gaps.

quite a bit when doing *Fairlight II*. When you’re working by yourself, it’s hard to keep motivation and morale up when you hit a problem. So that was a drawback of heading back to Sweden.”

Matters came to a head and the two had a major falling out – just as the game was almost finished. “There was maybe a couple of weeks’ work left on it, to iron out the last few bugs and so on, to get it released. But when my relationship with The Edge fell apart, no more development was done on



The sequel was in two parts, with a nice intermission screen appearing when you finish the first.

it. But it was released anyway, despite the bugs. The game wasn't in a finished state."

Confusion also surrounds the two separate releases of the game. The first was labelled as a dual 48/128K release and the enclosed loading instructions support this: "The game is effectively in two parts. On the 128K Spectrum these parts are loaded all at once. However, the 48K version loads the game in two sections." Sounds straightforward, except there is no 128K version on the tape! This was clearly a mastering error, as a second release quickly followed that had the same product code but was labelled 'Special 128K/+2 version'. This did load both sections in one go, and featured excellent AY music, but yes, you've guessed it, the bugs were still present.

THE OUTCOME

Fairlight II had the potential to top the original, had it being properly finished and playtested. But perhaps the biggest regret is that the end of the game clearly sets up *Fairlight III*. In fact, Bo wanted to make several sequels but it wasn't to be following his split from The Edge. "I had plans of going a lot further with the *Fairlight* world," he told me. "I wanted to keep developing the system, making it into more of a proper role-playing game. That was my long term plan."



This alternative loading screen appeared on the Spectrum 128K promotional cassette sent out to retailers.

The Edge did release another *Fairlight* title – *The Legend* – but this was just a collection of the first two games (the 48K versions, in both cases). I've not played through the version of *Fairlight II* in this release, but a quick glimpse at the code suggests it's the same as the regular, bugged release. That just leaves the versions for the Amstrad CPC and PCW computers, converted externally by Pennsoft. You'd expect the bugs were fixed in those, so *Fairlight II* might be finishable – just not on the Spectrum.

FUNKY FUNGUS



Zanklesoft

£ DONATION • 📅 APRIL 2023 • 🖨 48K / 128K

DOWNLOAD: <https://on.mom/UGam>

How did that song go? Won't you take me to...Fungitown? Well, we can't take you there, but we can take you to the next best place - Fungiland. And it is here that the fungi that inhabit the place are in trouble. Seto Taisho is attempting to take over the village. Why? We don't know as we're not told. Who is he? Erm, we don't know that either. The only thing we know about him is that he's made of broken pottery? Yeah...let's move on. The Fungi people decide that there's only one fungi that can help save the village and stop Mr. Taisho from taking over - it's Funky Fungi, as he is the only one who can wield the power of the Spinning Star. He has the power. He's committed. He can take on the evil hordes! This guy takes no shiitake.

Criticism

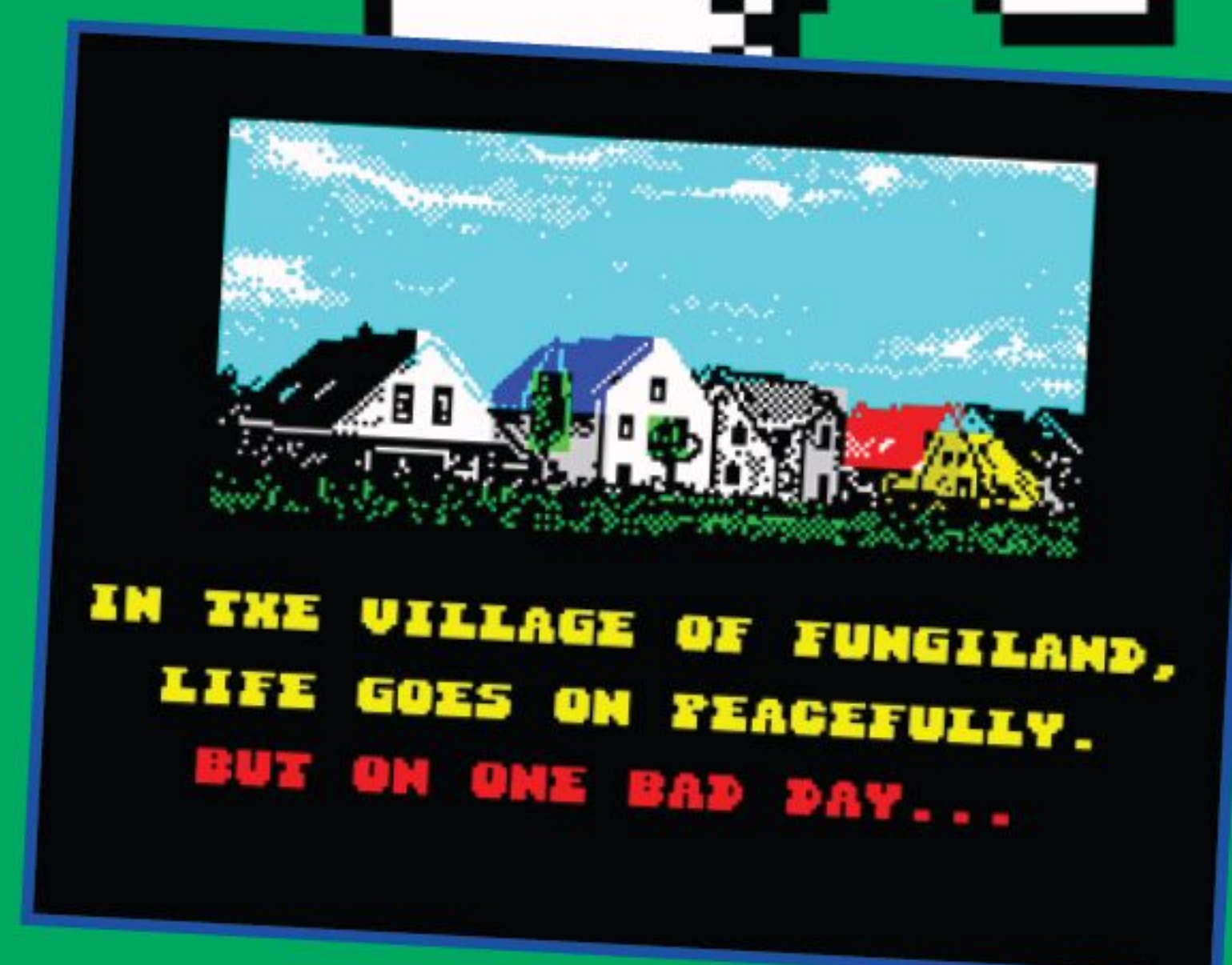
After a rather nice little intro describing the above scene, it's straight into the game and into the action. There's no time to dither



as you're against the clock and you have some killing to attend to. But first, you must navigate each level, reach the spinning star and then use it against each enemy, firing away until they dissipate into the air. Until you reach the star, you have just your nimbleness to get around the place and try not to get yourself killed, though even after collecting the star, you are up against it. The game is set across four worlds with each having 12 screens and my god does this game make you work at attempting to reach these. The first level - yeah, fine, nice and simple. The next - ooh, slightly tricky. Then, you

meet what will be your arch-enemy - I call him the Evil Potato of Doom. Whether he's a potato or not, I don't know but as we're talking fungi and other foodstuffs, I'm going for a potato.

The other enemies move around the screen on set paths and kill on contact, as standard. Mr Evil Potato, however, well he's got other ideas. Look him in the eye and expect an axe to get thrown at you and BAM! Death. Told you he was evil. This will happen over and over until you manage to find a way past but then you also have to take him on again to shoot him to smithereens.



The only way to shoot him is from behind which ups the difficulty even more. Suffice to say, it's not an easy task.

Away from the evil complex carbohydrate, *Funky Fungus* is a well-constructed arcade game. Each level is expertly designed, some with excellent scenery and colour

work, and all designed with a certain level of difficulty in mind. A high level. Even though you will scream, pull your hair out, and say many swear words, you can't help but admire the game.

Each level (that I've managed to reach, anyway) seems to have been meticulously planned, and

you can't help but admire it. It's hard, but not impossible, which is what makes you want to come back for more. There are welcome power-ups available as you play, including extra time, which

is a godsend when you're planning your next move as you wait for the perfect moment to jump over or past an unsavoury character.

- **Paul Davies**

Comments

The graphics are bright and sparkly and feature an excellent use of colour and nice pixel work on all sprites. In-game music is nice though a little repetitive and off-putting if you pay too much attention to it. Overall this is a real triumph. An excellent little platformer that requires expert timing, jumping, and a whole lot of patience. Difficult but something about it has you hanging around and wanting more. Whatever it is, it's definitely not that bloody potato! Argh!

Keyboard: [Q,A,O,P,M](#)

Joystick: [Sinclair, Kempston](#)

Use of Computer:	85%
Graphics:	86%
Playability:	87%
Getting started:	86%
Addictive Qualities:	88%

Overall: **85%**

Gordon's Take

Is there mushroom for another single-screen platformer? I

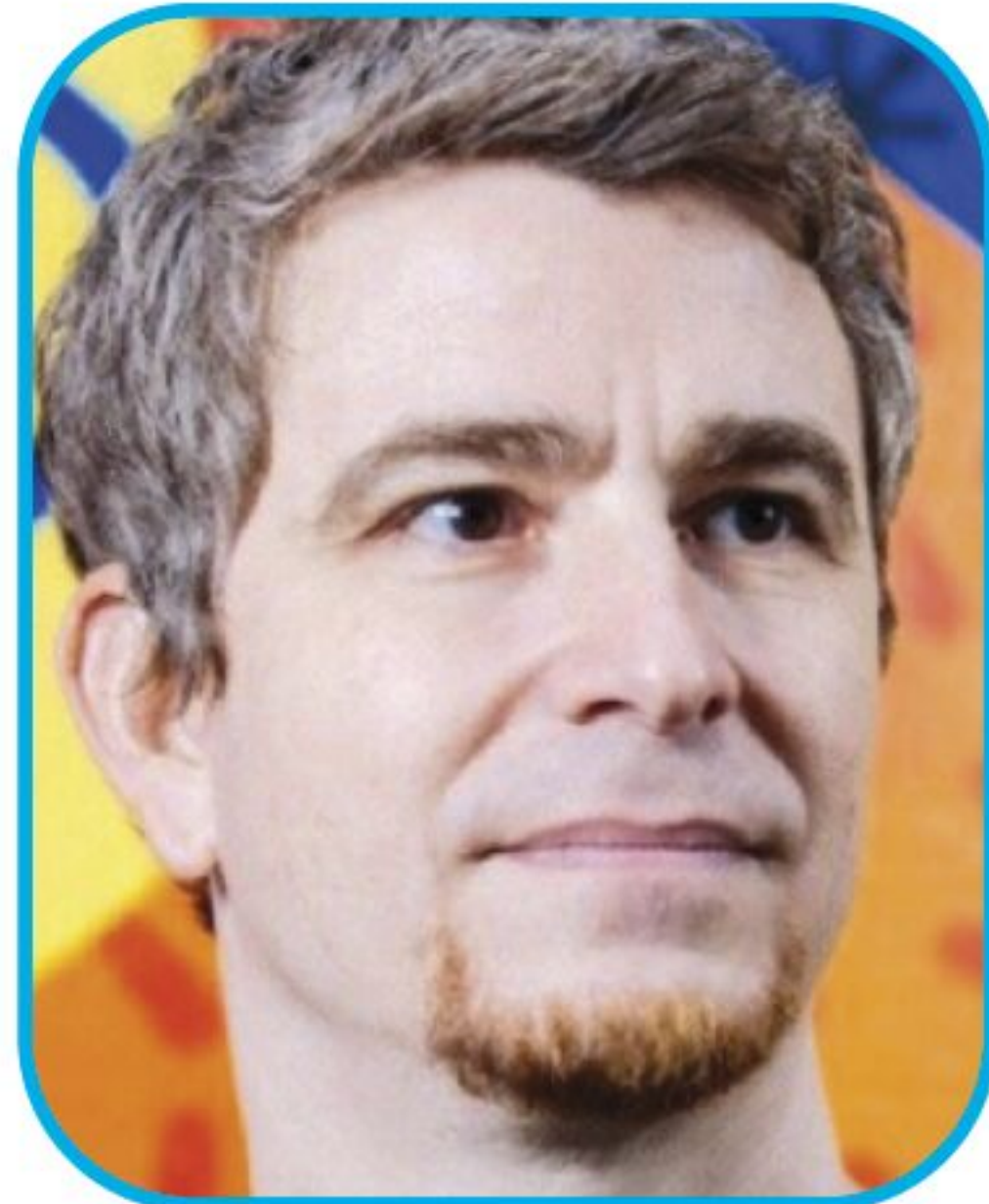
don't want to be a truffle-maker, so I'll say yes, there is, especially with a game that resembles a Porcini Paradise. Truly, the game looks appetising and so colourful that it could appease a psilocybinic haze (not speaking from experience). I'm quite fond of the concept where the character starts the level without weapons for the first half, and then it transforms into a shooter for the second half; each segment requires different skillsets. The difficulty curve grows exponentially, with the guarantee of encountering swear words as you progress to the later levels. *Funky Fungus* is a fully realised single-screen arcade game that tips its cap to simplistic but fun gaming.





Welcome to our regular look at what's happening with the Spectrum Next. This month, project founder Henrique Olifiers offer some brief comments on the final stretch of the campaign, we report on the new Midi player being developed and Gordon King investigates what happened to Marsmare. Now let's hand you to: **Henrique Olifiers**

It has been quite a long road for the second ZX Spectrum Next crowdfunding campaign, full of mishaps, global disasters and supply-chain disruptions thrown at us at every turn. Yet long as it may have been, the team cleared every level and, as you read this, we're ramping up full production towards the final boss: shipping the computers to more than 70 countries.



The extra time has been put to good use, resulting in an enhanced firmware with better HDMI compatibility, meatier manual and unexpected games, all thanks to the best community on the planet, without whom there would be no Spectrum Next, really.

Looking forward to the many unboxing videos that are sure to follow, the new Spectrum Next owners putting their machines to good use (let's hit 200 games made, eh?) and the buzz of happy people sharing their love for the hobby. Here's to a ZX Spectrum Next Xmas '23 and beyond!"

Prolific NEXT tinkerer, Jari Komppa is currently busy preparing a .mid player for the Spectrum NEXT. It will work by pipping music directly to the Next's AY chips. It's

still in the early stages of development, but fellow NEXT enthusiasts are invited to download and check out the binaries to see how it all works: <https://on.mom/dnaC>

Jari Komppa
jarikomppa

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Achievements

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Popular repositories

- soloud** (Public) - Free, easy, portable audio engine for games. 1.5k stars, 230 forks.
- proctree** (Public) - Procedural tree mesh generator (and editor). 106 stars, 36 forks.
- escapi** (Public) - Extremely Simple Capture API (ESCAPi) - simple webcam API for windows. 170 stars, 46 forks.
- ipc** (Public) - Public domain single header inter process communication primitives. 119 stars, 19 forks.
- atanua** (Public) - Atanua Real-Time Logic Simulator. 96 stars, 35 forks.
- emu8051** (Public) - 8051/8052 emulator with curses-based UI. 93 stars, 48 forks.

59 contributions in the last year

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Mon													
Wed													
Fri													



Gordon King investigates the status of previously announced NEXT games and gives developers the opportunity to update CRASH readers on when we're likely to get our hands on them.

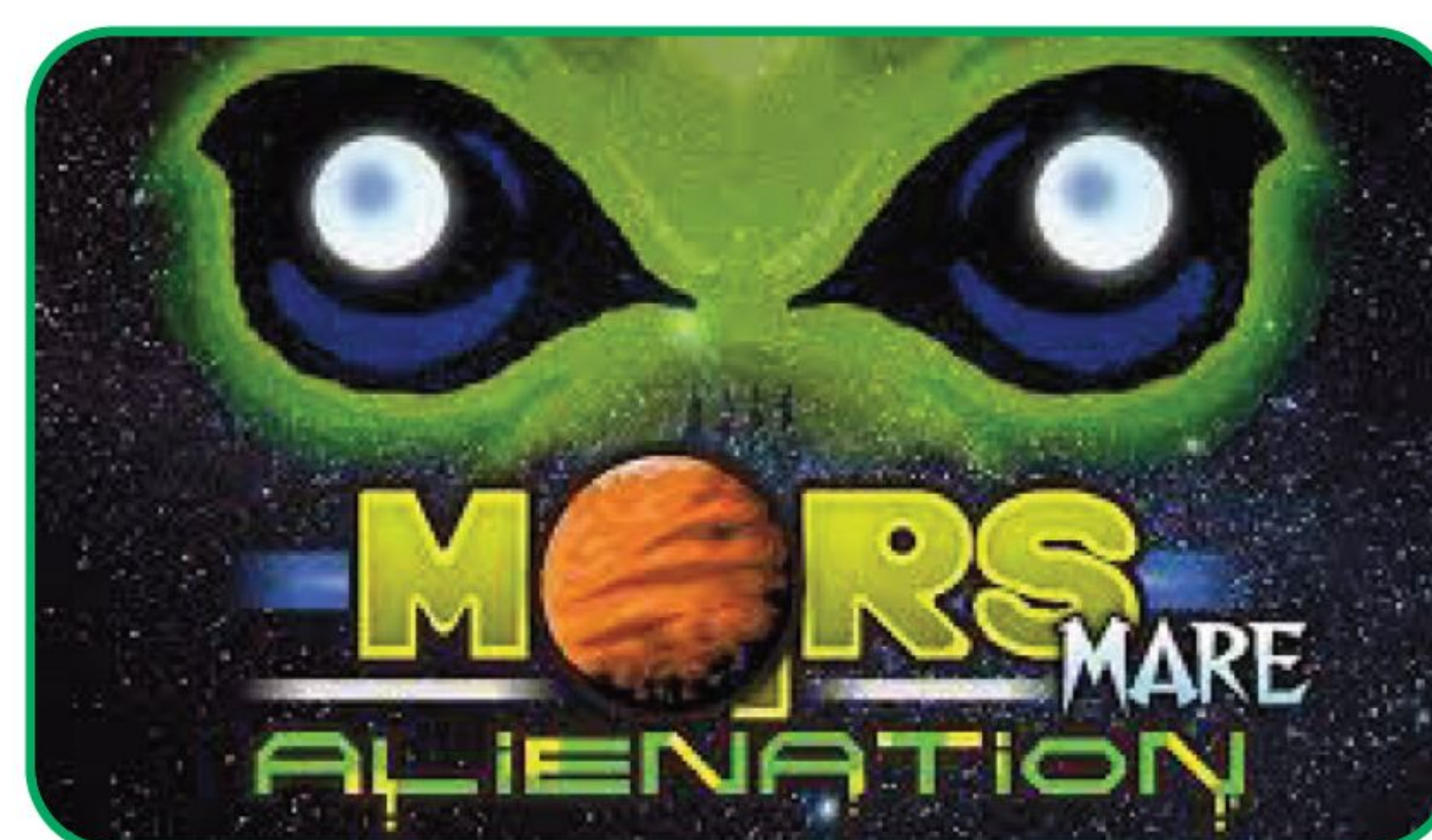
The initial launch of *Marsmare* for the 128K received widespread acclaim and respect.

It was featured in CRASH issue 2, where it achieved an impressive score of 94%.

Amidst much anticipation and excitement, a Kickstarter campaign was initiated in February 2021 to fund an expanded version of the game. This endeavour also encompassed a release tailored for the Spectrum Next, achieving its funding objectives with resounding success. This iteration was undeniably poised to become an essential purchase for all Next owners. Two years have passed, and the proposed release date of July 2021 came and went. What happened to this Metroidvania-like title? Is it still happening?

The crux of the matter is that no one anticipated the troubles in Ukraine. This has significantly impacted the mental well-being of the game's programmer and has acted as one of the main factors slowing down the progress of the project. Many of the game's assets are all completed (including art and music), and the physical SD cards and boxes are ready and waiting in storage. The latter is another issue due to the sanctions on Russia. The Drunkfly team has maintained transparency regarding the obstacles they encounter, yet they are committed to achieving a successful launch eventually. Why not pop over to their Kickstarter page and show them some support.

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/drunkfly/marsmare-alienation/posts/3875077>





Just as we were about to hit the big crimson SEND button to ship CRASH 17 to Mr Wilkins (our master-in-chief,) for final review and print, news of an exciting and unexpected new NEXT game hit. With his ears ringing from our collective scream of “STOP THE PRESSES”... or whatever the equivalent is for compiling a PDF, we bought ourselves the time to compile this short tease of Atic Attack for the ZX Spectrum NEXT.

The game is now available for everyone to enjoy. From what we’ve seen so far, the game draws inspiration from the new elements seen in Richard Jordan’s ingenious game, *Melkhior’s Mansion*, which is similarly influenced by the iconic Ultimate game. Expect to see the full review in issue 18.

But why wait for our opinion? Go and grab it now!

<https://9bitcolor.itch.io/atic-atac-next>

Sprites stay true to Ultimate's original cartoon look but sport all the bells and whistles you would expect from a Next game.

AY fans will also be in for a treat, as the game includes some delightful original ditties which really push what we've heard from the Next so far.



CRASH *Back Review*

Paul Davies takes a look at a game which escaped the gaze of the original CRASH team.

FUTURE GAMES

Mastertronic

£ 1.99 • 1986 • 48K / 128K

Though released during peak CRASH years, *Future Games* somehow got passed by and was never featured. Though, we can't just point the finger at CRASH for missing it, as it seems it didn't get a look in anywhere else either. So, let's give it its maiden review for a Speccy-based magazine, shall we?

Now, we're not given a time when this game is meant to be set, but we can assume it's some time in the future, otherwise, it's a very misleading game title. You are invited to take part in the annual Byrexian Lunar Games where you have the chance to leave wherever it is you're being held, and

hopefully be free once more. There's an air of *The Running Man* here as these are games where losing 'lives' is taken rather literally - so you need to be on your toes. Or you may lose them.

Criticism

There's an array of different games to play here, offering a nice variation to get to grips with and all having deadly consequences, as well as targets to hit to progress. First up is having to safely navigate your way through the planet's security system, which entails many maniac robots, stabbing spikes, hands reaching from the ground, and...

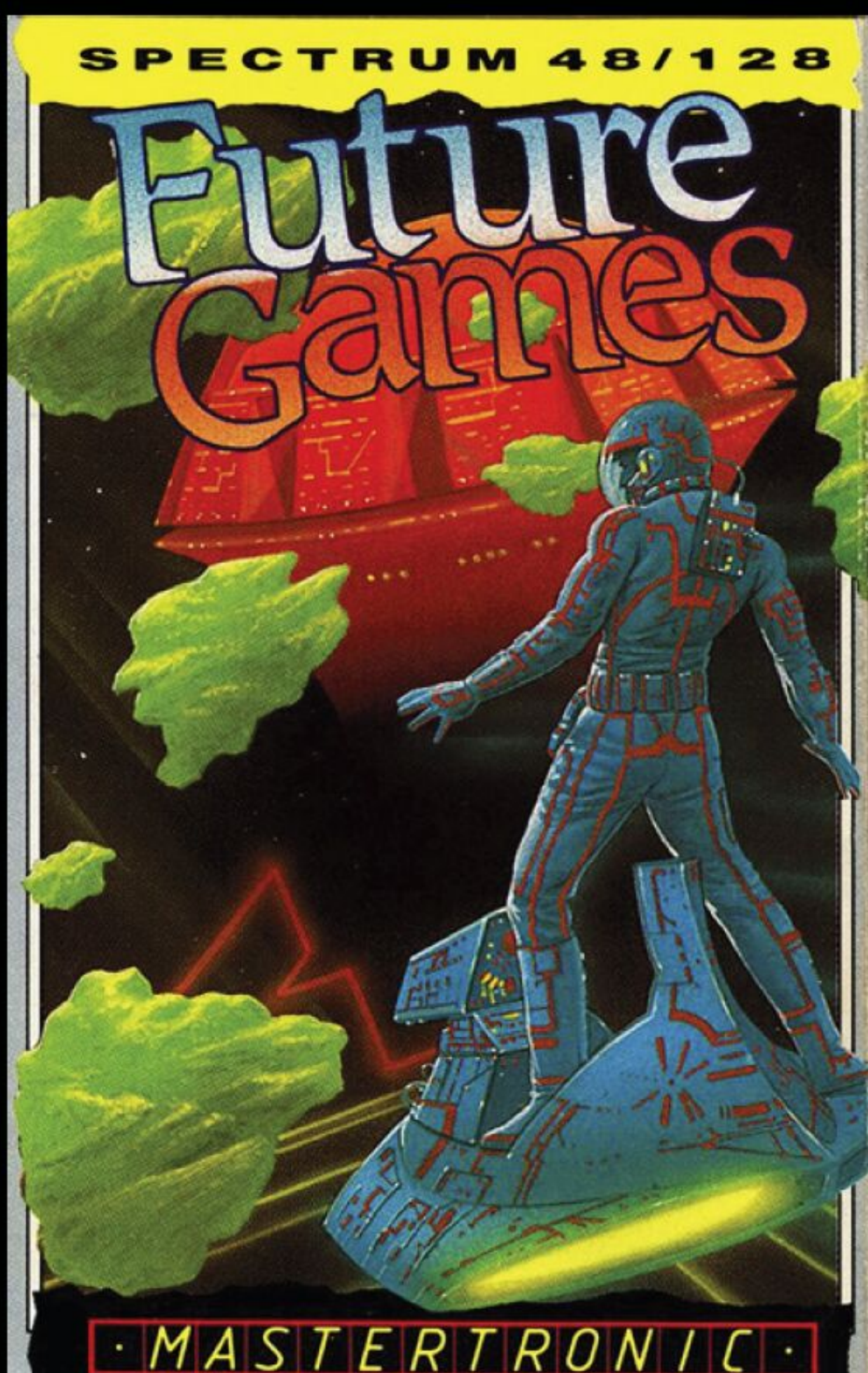
spiders. Yes, it seems no matter how far away from Earth you go, those pesky little buggers are always there scaring the bejesus out of you. Between each level, or



game, you have to board your lunar skimmer to make your way to the location of the next event. This entails you climbing inside your ship and hurriedly making your way across wild terrain, avoiding and shooting large rocks, and other ships, and avoiding bullets heading your way.

As you make your way to each game,





you'll find games where anticipation and hand/eye coordination is needed (being a dab hand of jumping out of the way of meteors comes in handy here), blasting flying discs out of the sky, and getting a bit of *Lunar Jetman* on the go. That's not to say it's as rock-solid as that, but you get to wear your space suit, flying back and forth and shooting shiny things out of the sky. As well as hand/eye coordination and shooting things, there's also a chance to get all *Daley Thompson* too as you're chased along a track by a giant space rhinoceros. Yes. Really.

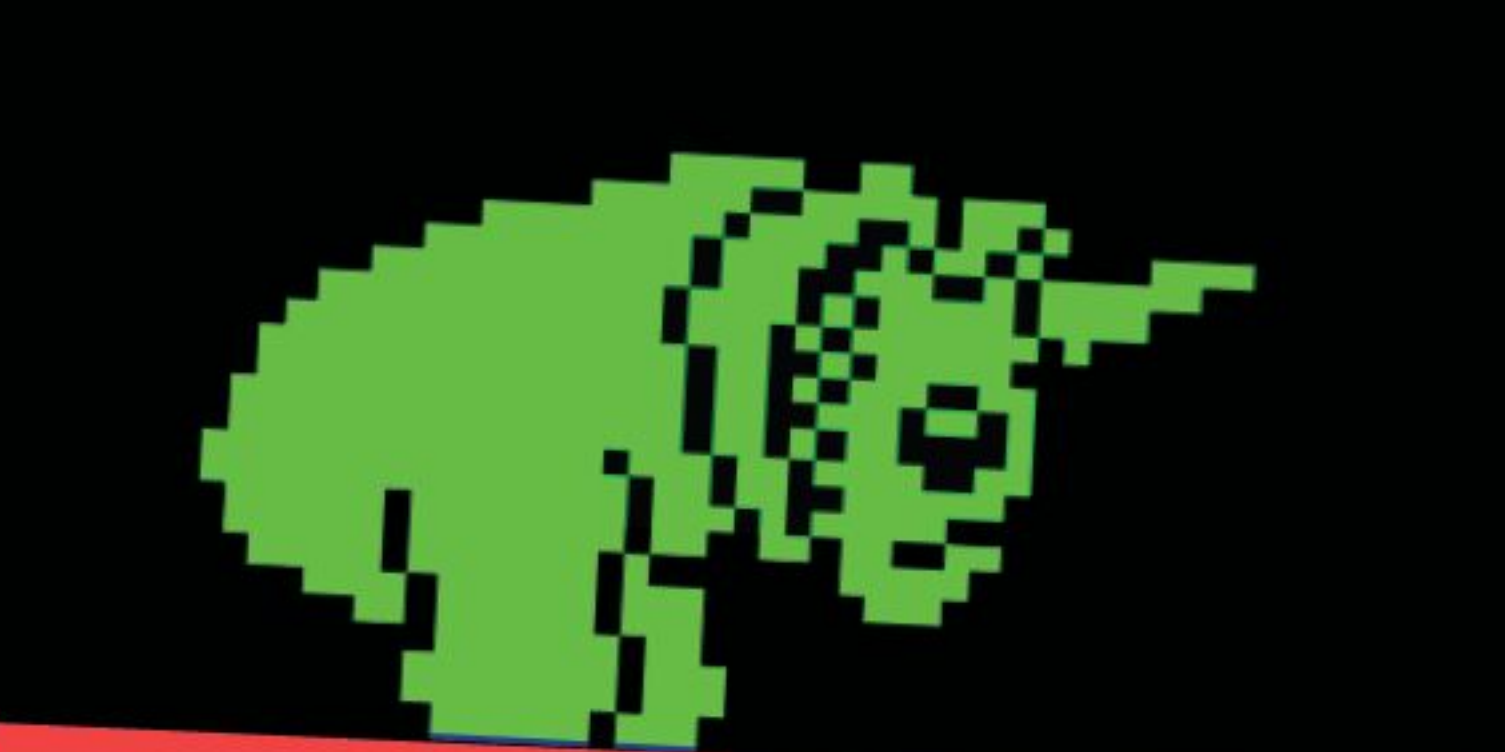
It's worth noting that each of these games can be practised before you decide to take them on for real and put your life on the line, with



each practice game also giving you the qualifying time or score needed to progress. The game is also set into two sections, meaning that a second load is required for the remaining games, completing the set.

I do remember playing *Future Games* way back when with my brother and not really knowing what the hell we were doing, and we also thought that *Future Games* was a sample of a few games that Mastertronic were working on and that they'd release the full games in the future. Ahh, the innocence and naivety of youth.

- **Paul Davies**



Comments

Generally are nice and cartoony, though some levels look nicer than others with nice animation in places. There's not much sound during play but Tim Follin's beeper work here is excellent, creating a space-like atmosphere on the title menu. Wait a few seconds for it to kick in and enjoy. Overall this is a nice mix of games - some bizarre (see space Rhinoceros), some simple but others quite tricky and infuriating which make you glad you're allowed a practice run. Could be better, could be worse - one of those games, you know?

Keyboard: **Redefinable**

Joystick: **Sinclair, Kempston**

Use of Computer:	78%
Graphics:	76%
Playability:	77%
Getting started:	78%
Addictive Qualities:	76%
Overall:	74%

CRASH *Back* Issue 17

Paul Davies straps on his rose tinted glasses and takes us back to CRASH of yesteryear.

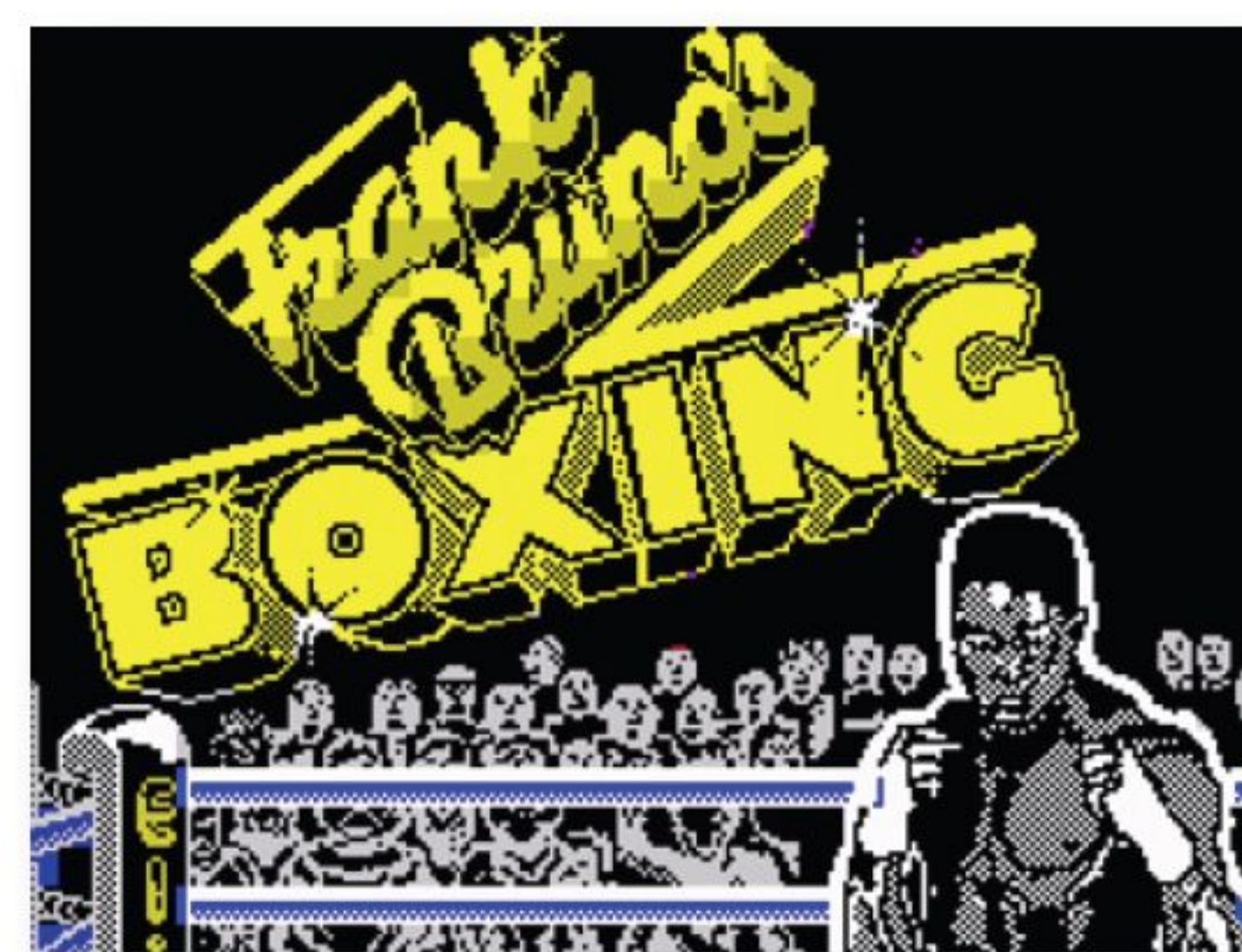


cover of Crash, given the full Oli treatment. The lucky fellas. The reason for this is because inside is a preview of their game called... *Frankie Goes to Hollywood*. Hmm, maybe they could have worked on that a bit more, eh? Ah well, it does the job I suppose. Looking at the cover it seems to involve someone getting stabbed in the back. We've all been there.

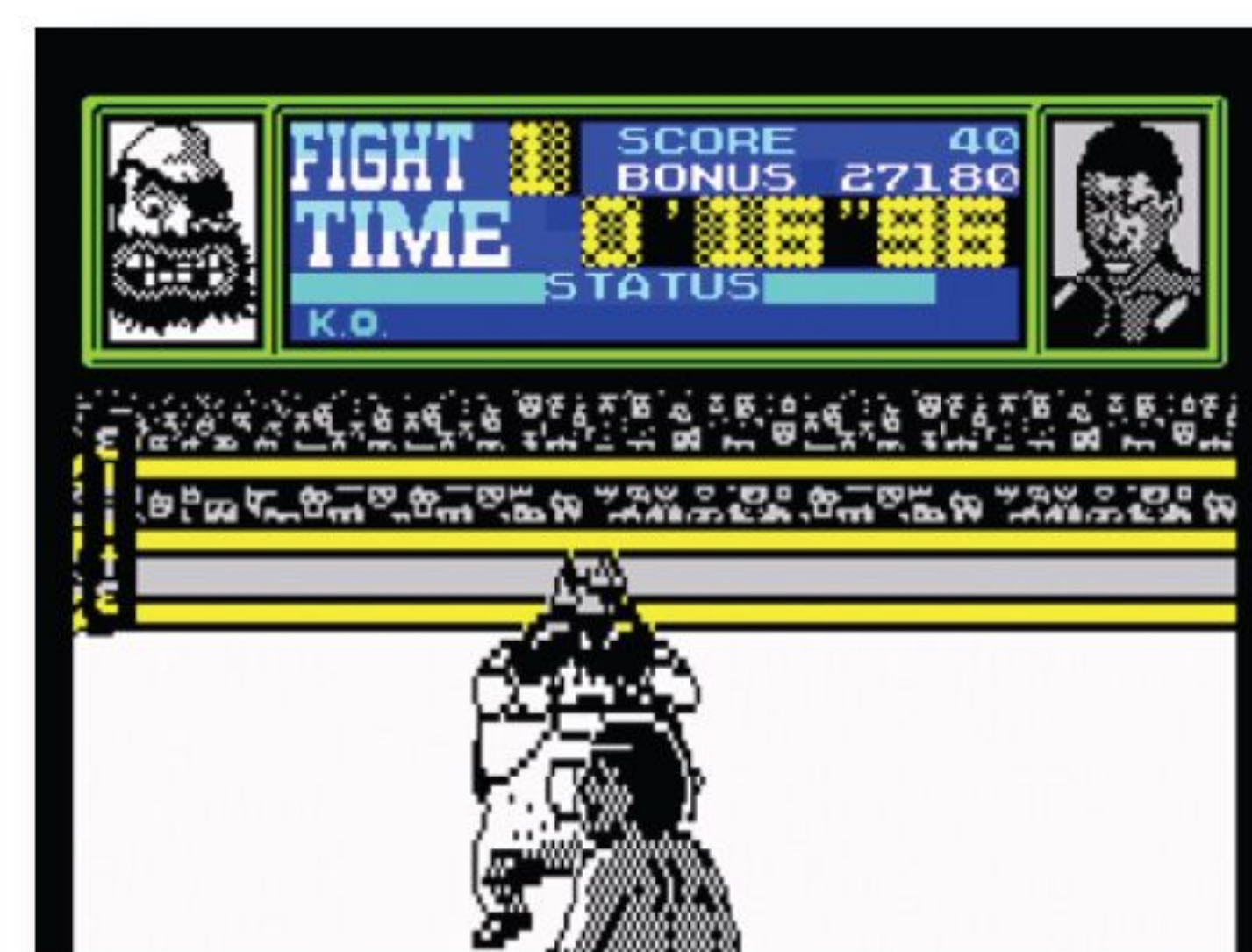
Dun-dun, dun-dun, dun-dun, dun-dun... relax, don't do it! So said Frankie Goes to Hollywood. Don't do what? Buy a Commodore 64? I think we have a deal there, Frankie! I kid (do I?), this little Frankie-related intro can only be in reference to one thing. Yeah, you guessed it, the Liverpooldian pop supergroup has themselves on the hallowed

So what's going on this month? Games! News! *Jetman*! A visit to Denton Designs! Competitions! All good stuff, though I'm sure there'll be some stinkers in the game reviews - don't worry guys, I'll make sure to find them. No? You don't want crap game reviews to feature in this section? Ah well, you can't always get what you want. Ask Mick Jagger.

First up, it's Mr. Mangram's still new-ish monthly piece, *Merely Mangram*. Lloyd has news and it's bound to knock you out - it's boxing-related. Who here loves *Frank Bruno*? That's right, everyone does, and that's good news because *Elite*



has given us the news that they're working on a game featuring the lovable heavyweight. They've worked with Frank himself, along with his manager Terry Lawless, to ensure that techniques featured in the game are akin to what we'd



see when Frank gets in the ring. Sounds like it'll be a heavyweight belt-er. Get it? Belt? Nevermind.

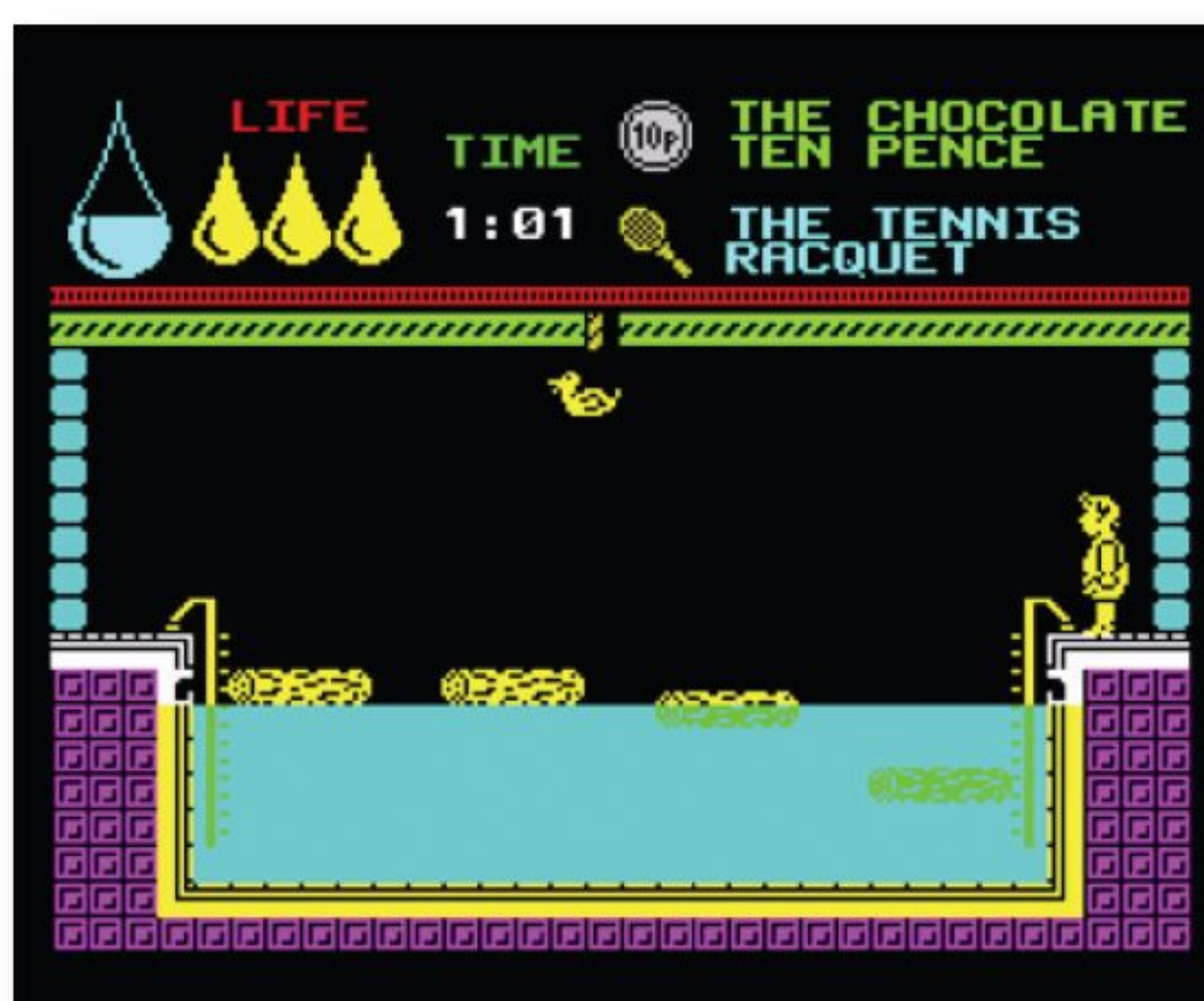


Lloyd also picks out one of this month's new releases *Shadowfire* from Denton Designs (they get around a bit, don't they?). Given it's a new game, you may well be surprised that DD says they're already working on its sequel - *Shadowfire 2*. Guys?

Is that the best you can...I'm going to give up now. The sequel will also be an icon-based adventure game, but this time will feature animated characters as opposed to the stationary ones you find in the first game (spoiler alert!) and will continue the adventures of the Enigma crew. It'll also be a bit longer as DD state that the first one can be completed in around two hours (hmmm, we'll see about that) so they want to add 'more game' to the next one. Expect a release at the

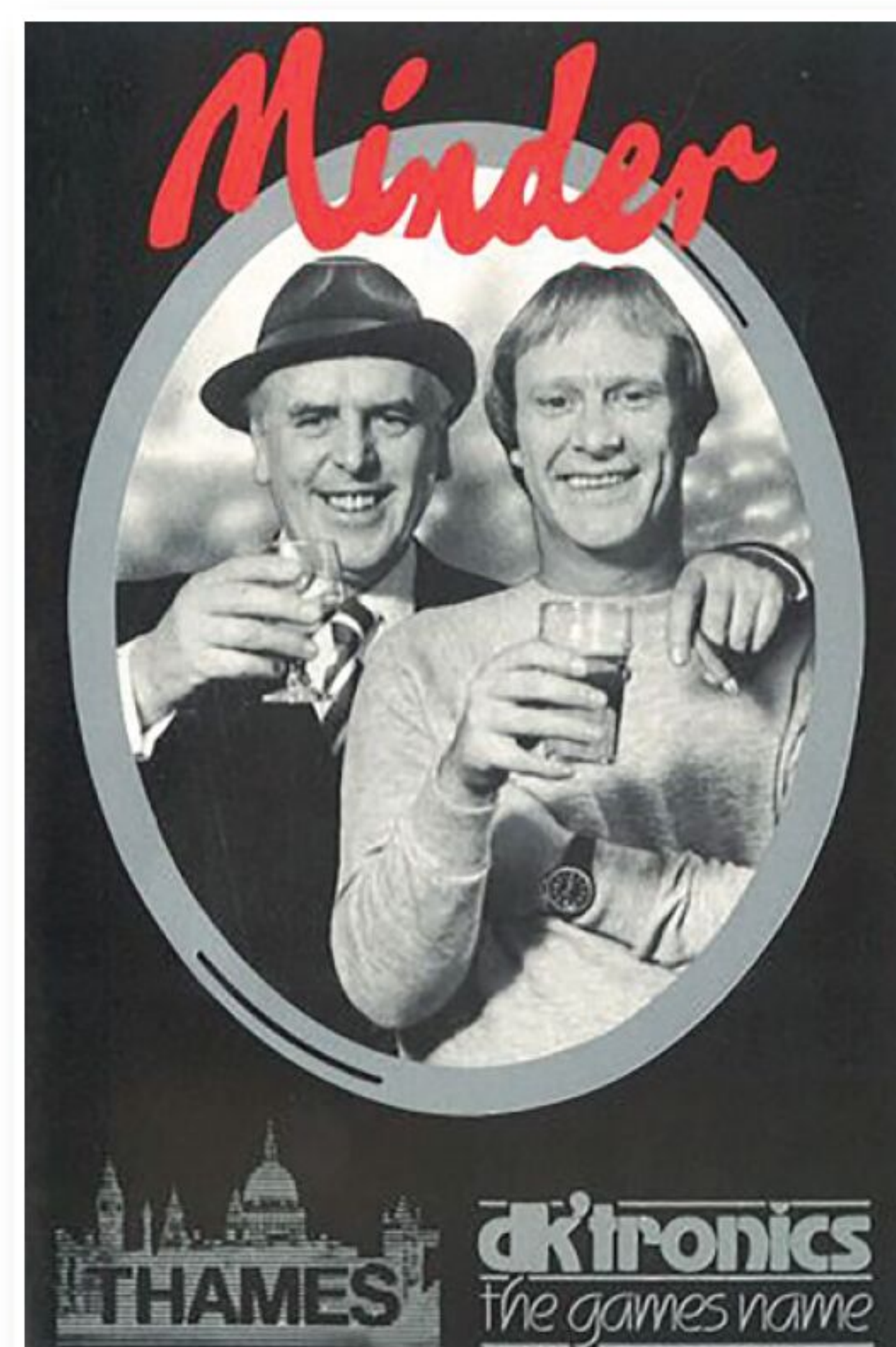
end of the year but maybe we should wait until we get our hands on the first one, right?

Mikro-Gen also features in Lloyd's rambles as they release another Wally game in the shape of *Herbert's Dummy Run*, the sequel to *Everyone's A Wally*. You take control of Hebert, of which who was the little tyke that was crawling around the floor in EAW, draining energy from you. He's found himself lost in a rather large department



store and must find his way back to Wally and Wilma who are waiting for him in the Lost and Found of the centre. Surely as parents, they should be looking for him and not the other way around? Pfft. Modern parenting, eh?

Staying with games, can I interest you in this one for £9.99, squire/guv'nor/mate/cockney sparra'? (delete as applicable) It's a blinder! I'm cutting me own throat here! If you're interested, get yourself daaan to the Winchester and Arfur will sort you aaart. If you didn't get the references to what I'm talking about from all that (how could you not?), it's *Minder*. Yes, that one. Terry, Arthur Daley, Mike, and a large handful of other un-savouries have landed on the Spectrum, trying to force a few quid

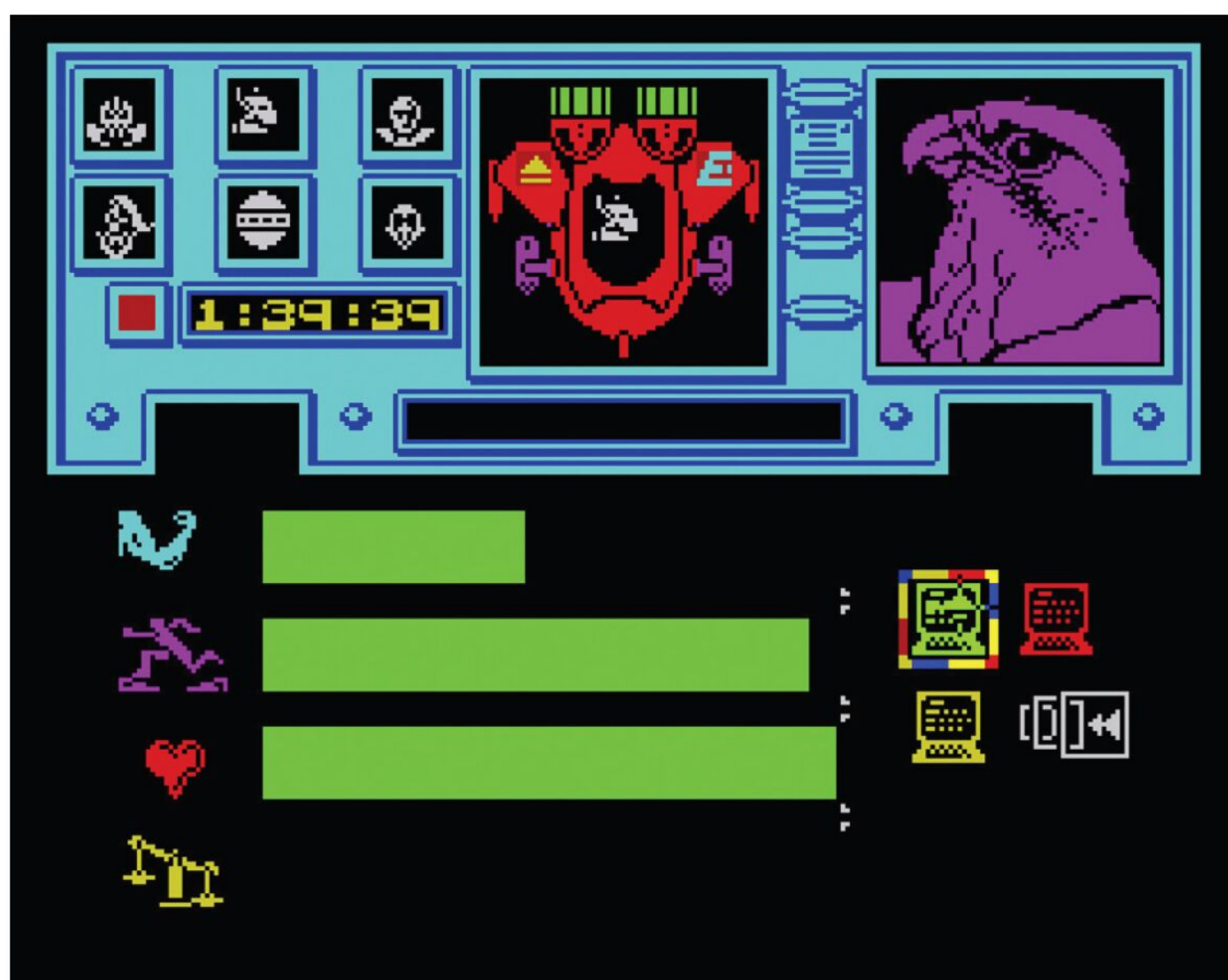


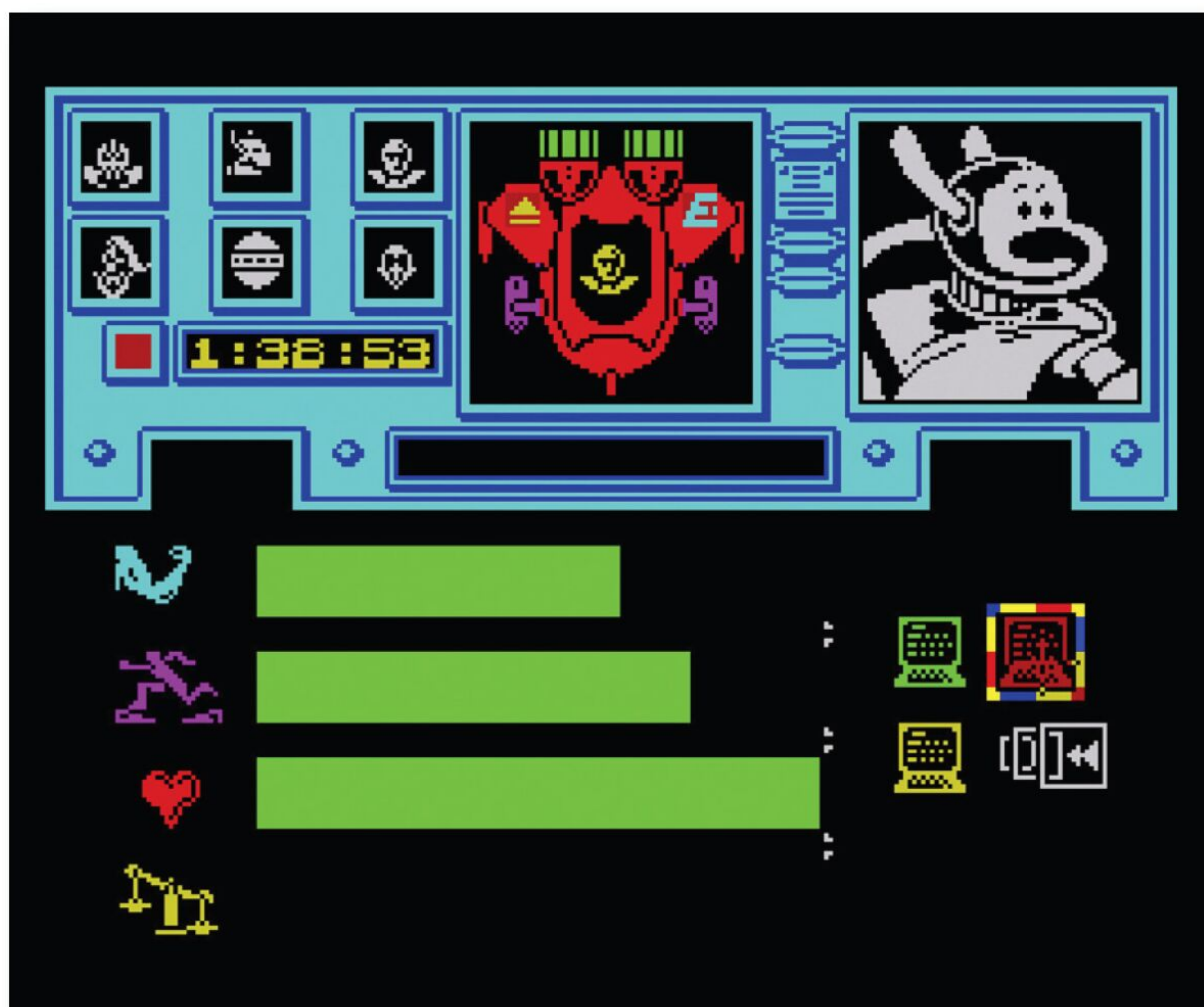


out of your pocket. *Minder* is a trading simulation game where you meet with a number of vendors across multiple venues, buy up some stock of various items (some sordid apparently - ooh err!), and try to sell them off at a profit. *Minder* retains the humour of the TV series but you mustn't forget that you've got a job to do. You have fifteen days to buy and sell as much stock for profit as you can, as after the fifteen days are up, any stock you haven't sold will be taken away from your final score. Oh, and you'd better watch out for the old bill - they're always loitering with intent hoping to catch you up to no good with some not-such-legitimate goods, and you don't want to end up behind bars, do you? That wouldn't be so good for you.

We've already talked about its sequel, bizarrely, but here's the original game in full-colour glory - it's *Shadowfire*. The game's title is taken from the ship featured in the game, although it's not exactly ready to be piloted, in fact, it's still in

the design phase. The ship will be capable of jumping from one planet's orbit to another, which sounds rather nifty (and probably rather expensive), though as it only amounts to a bit of a blueprint at present, there's no chance of taking such large bounds across space just yet. Nevertheless, the plans are in peril. Contained on a microdisc, the plans have been safely embedded into the spine (as you do) of Ambassador Kryxix (he's good) though poor old Kryxix has been captured by General Zoff (he's bad), a traitor to the Empire, and is being held captive on Zoff's ship, aptly named the Zoff5. Wonder what happened to the four that preceded it? Anyway, should Zoff manage to interrogate Kryxix and discover the plans for this powerful ship, it would put Zoff in a position to rule the

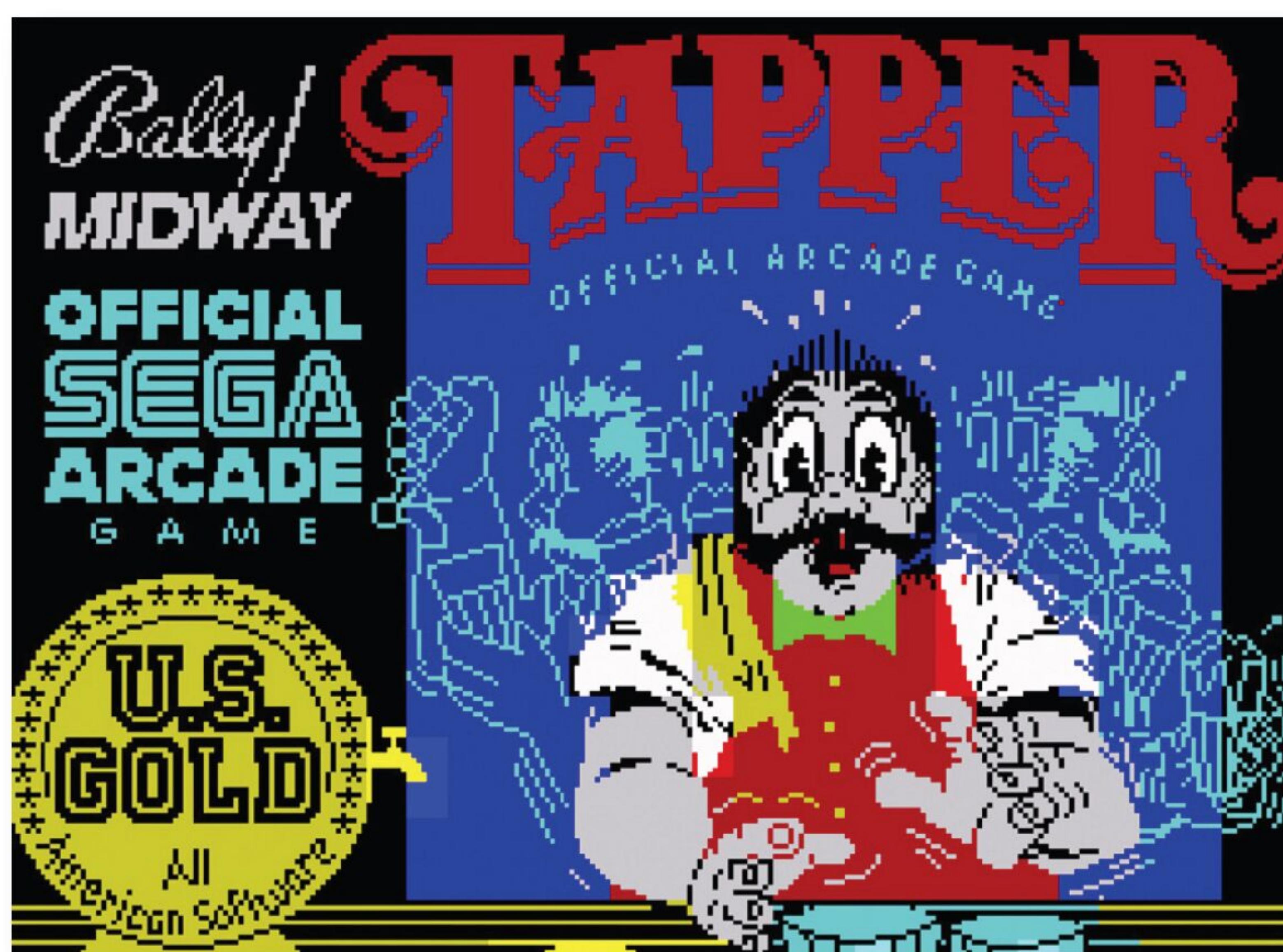


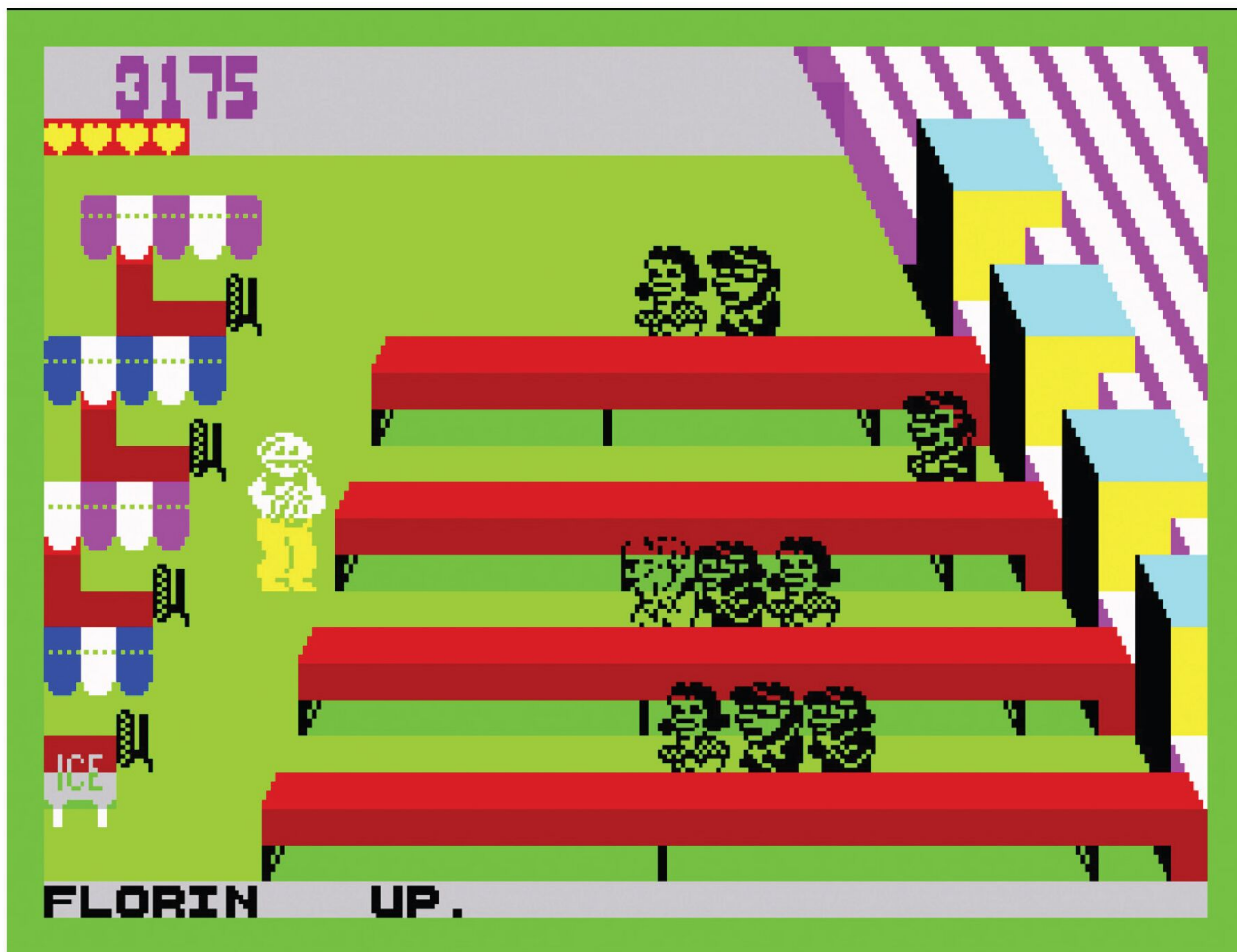


Empire! Muhahahahahaha. And we don't want that, do we? Enter the Enigma crew, in which there are six members, all of which are unique in style as well as skills. I won't list them all here as it'll take too long and there are other things to ramble about before I run out of space. You control each member of the crew as you aim to navigate your way around the Zoff5, take on General Zoff's henchmen, and attempt to rescue Kryxix before it's too late. This is an icon-driven game meaning you have to control each member by selecting the appropriate action button to guide and control the crew to do your bidding. It seems very complicated looking at it here, but we're assured the accompanying booklet that comes with the game is more than helpful

when it comes to learning the controls. That's ok then because I'd probably just be doing my usual 'pressing random buttons until something works' routine, which undoubtedly would not work here. 96% for *Shadowfire* - wow, now that's something worth inserting a microdisc into your spine for.

Dinking alcohol is such fun, isn't it? Well, I wouldn't know as my mother won't allow it, but I've seen enough films to realise that being a drunk is where I want to be when I'm allowed it. It will be a while until I'm able to go full Animal House, so in the meantime, I'll have to make do with playing games that involve beer instead. In this case, though, I'll be on the other side of the bar, serving the barflies, drunks, and youngsters with questionable ID - it's *Tapper*. *Tapper* is great in the arcade and now it's made its way to the Speccy, no doubt staggering and slurring on the way. It's a simple premise - fill and slide as many pints of beer as you can down as many bars as you can to satisfy your clients, before they reach the end and give you a good seeing to for taking too long. Why so angry? Maybe they should think about drinking less. There are





many bars to navigate and many punters to serve, and many pint glasses to catch when they're slung back in your direction after being emptied. Pfft. Do these people have no class? It's frantic and panic-inducing but there are a few bonus levels to break things up a bit, but you know that it's only a matter of time before you're wildly hammering your joystick again and working up a sweat. If you ever wanted to know what it felt like to be a barman in a very busy bar, then *Tapper* is for you. It also sounds like if you want to give

yourself heart palpitations, then *Tapper* is just the ticket also. A Crash Smash award makes me want to do one thing - take me to the bar! Well, the one in the Speccy that loads up when you fling *Tapper* into it. 'Time gentleman, please...to buy yourself a copy of *Tapper*!'.

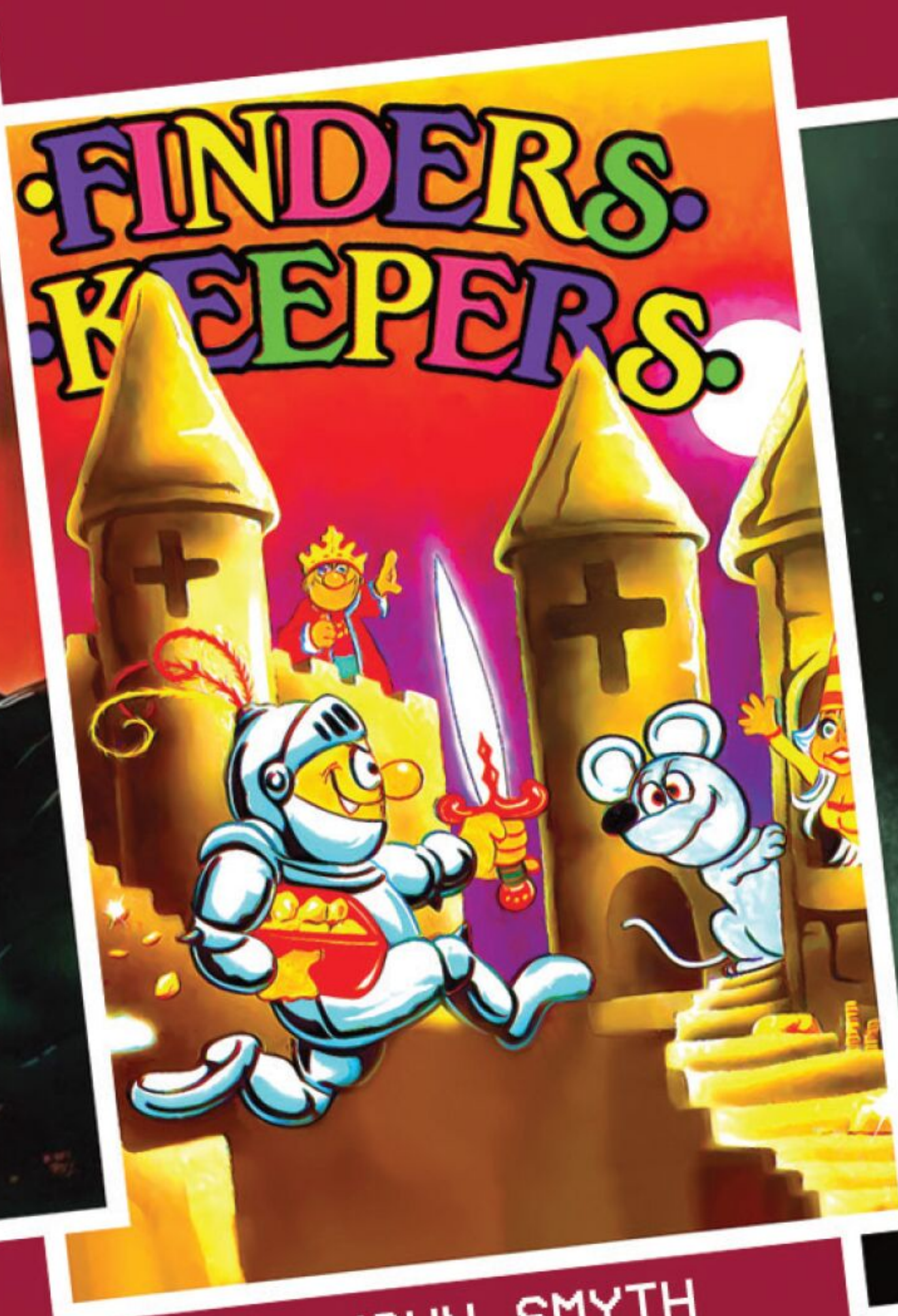
You may wonder where these terrible games that I always manage to find have gone in this issue. The ones I promised earlier on. Errr, well, umm, I don't know. I seem to have gotten carried away talking about the good ones and have

forgotten about the bad ones. Oh well. You got off well, this time - think yourself lucky, I say, as you know next month there'll be some right stinkers that I'll talk about. So, prepare yourself for an onslaught of horrors, eye-bleeding graphics, and some absolute stinkers. At least I hope there will be, as I don't want to come across as a liar now, do I?

Don't let me down, Crash!



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